48-Page Quarterly Issue

APRIL 7, 1936 15c

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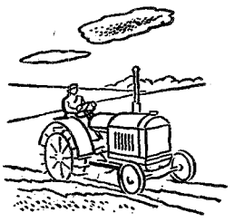

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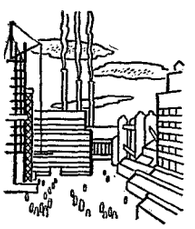

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All you have to do to enter is to think of titles to the three cartoons pictured at the right, and send them in to us with a 10-weeks' subscription for $1. If you are already a subscriber, enter the contest anyway, and we'll either extend your current subscription or send the magazine to a friend whom you designate.

Remember, the contest closes April 15! You can't afford to delay any longer entering the contest. Do it today—your chance of winning is as good as anyone's.

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1. Anyone (except employes of the New Masses or their families) is eligible to enter the title contest.

2. The contest opened January 23. Titles must be received at the New Masses Contest Dept., Box 76, Madison Square Station, New York, N. Y., on or before April 15, 1936. Awards will be made as soon after the end of the contest as the titles can be considered by the judges.

3. You need not use the attached coupon, although it is most convenient, but in order to be eligible in the Title Contest, your subscription for 10 weeks for the New Masses with $1, the subscription price, must accompany the titles you submit.

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The figure on the left is Mr. Hitler. The one on his knee, perhaps receiving good advice, or a pat on the shoulder, or both, is Willie the Chief Muckraker of his time, a particular object of loathing and aversion to all college professors, teachers and liberals. It is obvious that both of them are going places—any minute. *What is YOUR title for this picture?*

Cartoon Number Two

The cops have just finished "breaking up" the demonstration — including a few heads. And here, by Holy Tammany, they are again, back on another street with their ranks formed all over. Can you tie that? It's enough to make a good bull ask for a desk job or another precinct where there ain't no red agitators and the people are willing to starve quietly. *What's YOUR title?*

Cartoon Number Three

Look what old man WAR picked up — an olive branch. Must have been dropped by the Dove of Peace—in a hurry —when he heard Hitler's broadcast the other night. Anyway, old man WAR doesn't seem to be worrying much. . . . *Got your title for this one, yet?*

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New Masses

APRIL 7, 1936

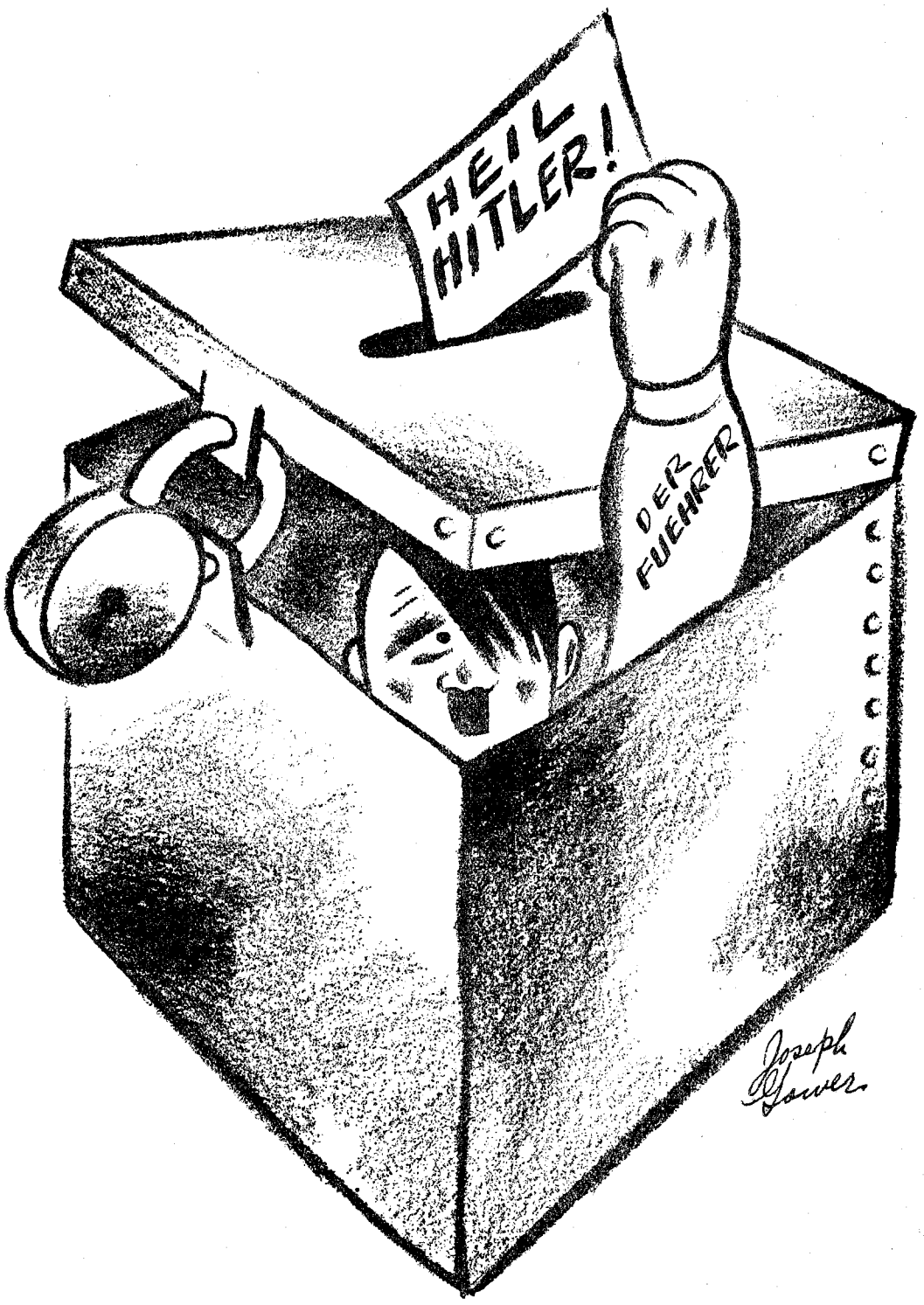
This Quarterly

FROM time to time, THE NEW MASSES has published various articles dealing with specific middle-class issues. We have also discussed broad, national developments such as taxation, the suppression of civil rights, the growth of fascism and preparations for war which are as much the concern of the middle class as of the workers and farmers.

It has never been possible, of course, to present a comprehensive picture of middle-class problems in this country within the confines of a weekly magazine. But within these obvious limitations we have collated and analyzed the main aspects of those problems which confront this section of the American people today.

The articles in this quarterly issue speak for themselves. Their findings, we believe, justify the title "Challenge to the Middle Class." For the days when school-teachers, engineers, architects, doctors, accountants, newspapermen and other professional groups were passive in the face of economic and political realities are over. With all economic security collapsing under them, they cannot remain passive. It is not we who challenge the middle class. It is capitalism. The disintegrating social-economic order confronts them with the choice between ruin and organized action for a better life and for a better social order.

This issue has been edited by a committee composed of Lewis Corey, chairman, Stanley Burnshaw, Joseph Freeman and Isidor Schneider. The material in the following pages shows abundantly why and to what extent the professional groups have organized and have gone on strike. The crisis has destroyed middle-class prejudices about trade-union action. Large sections of the lower middle class have realized that they belong with the working class and the farmers in the common struggle of all functioning groups against the common exploiter.



Minnesota Convention

PROFESSIONAL and middle-class people, like the workers and the farmers, have watched with intense interest the state convention of the Farmer-Labor Party which met this week-end in Minneapolis. That convention took a significant step in the right direction. It adopted a resolution reaffirming the need for building state Farmer-Labor Parties as well as a nationwide Farmer-Labor Party. The resolution called for a special committee to be elected with representation from each congressional district. The committee will call conferences of and will cooperate with other progressive, labor, farmer and political organizations and leaders "in calling a national conference to explore the possibilities of a national Farmer-Labor ticket in 1936." Minnesota says it is ready to cooperate in promoting state Farmer-Labor Parties, in pushing forward to a concentrated campaign to elect Farmer-Labor congressmen this year and in building a national party.

This is good news, especially at a time when local Farmer-Labor Party organizations are springing up in various parts of the country. The latest moves in that direction have taken place in Akron and South Bend. Much now depends on how energetically the committee selected at the Minnesota convention will carry out the resolution. The general trend there indicated that something effective will be done. Th majority of the delegates stopped red-baiters, preserved unity again split threatened by job-seeking

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cians, made several constitutional changes which tend to democratize inner-party life and adopted a platform which, while less "radical" in phrasing than that of 1934, meets the requirements of the present moment. The fact that most of the delegates, as well as Governor Olson and Senator Benson, favored taking action toward a national Farmer-Labor Party is an auspicious beginning. It is now up to the progressive, labor, farmer and professional groups in other states to press the issue forward.

Struggle in France

EVER since March 7, the reactionaries in France have been attempting to exploit the international war danger for their own purposes. At first it was a howling press campaign which insisted that the sole solution of the emergency, as far as France was concerned, lay in recalling Laval through a so-called "National Union Cabinet." But since nobody paid any attention to this proposal, they resorted to simple treachery, putting pressure on British die-hards and seeking to sabotage Flandin's negotiations at the London Conference.

Facing disaster in the approaching elections, the capitalist oligarchy no longer uses the war-scare to discourage people from voting Left. It is using more desperate methods, provoking a financial panic and civil disorders. In the past few days it has begun a whispering campaign charging that the People's Front government intends to devaluate the franc—with the result that there have been huge bank withdrawals and decline in dividends.

Meanwhile the fascist factions are busily arming. Last week an arsenal belonging to the Croix de Feu was discovered at Nice. Humanité has been publishing a mass of facsimile documents showing that the dissolved Action Française purchased hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of arms and munitions from Germany since 1930. And the Royalists admit the authenticity of these documents.

The climax was reached in the exposure of a circular in which the Nationalist Center openly declares: "If the People's Front wins, civil war will certainly follow." The threat would be even graver if last week's banquet which proposed a single united fascist front had not ended in riot, bloodshed and confusion. Thus far the efforts of Socialists and Communists to persuade the government to disarm political groups have not succeeded, but Premier Sarraut is shortly to convene the prefects and it is understood he will order the suppression of all groups engaged in provoking violence.

Elections: Nazi Style

LAST Sunday's elections may be considered an achievement for the Nazis only if improved technique in choking popular sentiment is taken as the basis of judgment. Several innovations in the field of popular suffrage were introduced by Herr Goebbels who apparently was afraid that the normal methods of Nazi electioneering would not produce the number of "Jas" ordered by Hitler. Bands of armed Nazis scoured the neighborhoods for possible stay-aways. Dissenting votes expressed in the form of unmarked or otherwise voided ballots were also counted as "Jas." The correspondent of The New York Times wired:

> . . . If an admission at a Frankfurt polling place and the experiences of six foreign correspondents in Berlin are typical of the rest of the country, millions of votes have been counted for Hitler that were cast against him.

But Hitler's latest hoax should deceive no one. It was performed deliberately in order to lend a semblance of popular backing to the desperate war moves of German finance capital. Hitler will undoubtedly attempt to make use of Sunday's circus further to impress certain groups within the British government that they ought to side with him and increase their defiance of those powers which seek to block the Nazi war drive. In this sense, Sunday's spectacle must be viewed with increased alarm by all who would preserve peace.

Guggenheim Awards

THIS year's Guggenheim's fellowship awards, just announced, are another sign of the growing strength of American proletarian culture. No less than eight names are immediately identifiable as belonging on the Left. They include the dramatist, Albert Bein, author of *Let Freedom Ring;* the two novelists Josephine Herbst whose latest novel was *The Executioner Waits,* and James T. Farrell, author of the *Studs Lonigan* trilogy; three poets, Kenneth Fearing, author of *Angel Arms* and *Poems,* the latter issued by a poets' collective, Dynamo Publishers, and Isidor Schneider, author of the volume of poems, *Comrade Mister* and the recently published novel, *From the Kingdom of Necessity;* the critic and biographer, Granville Hicks, author of *The Great Tradition* and of the forthcoming *Life of John Reed.* Two are editors of THE NEW MASSSES. Among the painters who received the awards were Peter Blume and Harry Sternberg, Left artists. Reproductions of their work have appeared in THE NEW MASSES. It is further noteworthy that there is acknowledgment in this year's awards, as in other years, of the cultural contributions of Negroes. Zora Neale Hurston, author of *Jonah's Gourd Vine* and *Mules and Men,* and Dr. Abram L. Harris, Associate Professor of Economics at Howard University and author, with S. D. Spero, of *The Black Worker: A Study of the Negro in the American Labor Movement,* have received appointments. The project for which Dr. Harris received his award is a study of aspects of the economic systems of Karl Marx and Thorstein Veblen.

Statement on Brazil

"BRAZIL," writes Waldo Frank, distinguished novelist, secretary of the American Writers League, "is potentially one of the greatest nations in the world. This is true, not chiefly because of its immense natural resources which are probably greater than those of any other country except the Soviet Union; but because of the profoundly original and creative character of the Brazilian people. This people is beginning to rise. Its first movement of self-expression inevitably has brought it in collision with the small oligarchy, gathered largely in two or three of the southern Brazilian states, who for two generations have been exploiting Brazil under orders of British and American imperialism. In response to this first stirring of a great people, the government is having recourse to the most brutal repressive measures—the usual tactics of Big Money, whether it sails under the colors of fascism, monarchy or 'democracy.' Seventeen thousand good Brazilians are today in jail, among them a host of intellectual leaders—economists, writers, engineers, liberal statesmen. American opinion has great influence on the Brazilian government. If our voice is now heard in protest against this fascization of the largest republic on the American continents, the Brazilian people will receive the

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kind of support it deserves from us, as the older sister nation. Let us do all we can to help Brazil in its struggle for economic and cultural independence by insisting on the liberation of these thousands of men whose one crime is loyalty to the Brazilian people. Victory for reaction in Brazil will strengthen reaction not only throughout South America, but in the United States and Great Britain—the real 'rulers' of Brazilian economics. Victory for democracy in Brazil today, will go far to protect democracy (which needs protection) throughout the Americas—indeed, throughout the world."

Luis Prestes, beloved leader of the Brazilian people, is now in the hands of the monstrous Vargas oligarchy. Arthur Ewart, formerly a Reichstag deputy in Germany, now lies in a Brazilian jail with ribs broken by the Vargas police. His wife has been subjected to the vilest indignities and brutalities. Both will be deported to Nazi Germany unless a firm protest by American workers and liberals prevents it.

Smash These Bills!

MORE than one hundred of our readers have sent us telegrams and letters protesting against the Tydings-McCormack bill and the Russell-Kramer sedition bill. Those measures are aimed at fundamental civil rights. Through them the reactionaries want to stop all progressive thought and expression of opinion, all effective trade-union action. We shall forward the telegrams and letters of protest from our readers to Congress. Some of these will be published in THE NEW MASSES. Send us more protests. The sedition bills must be stopped.

The Tampa Trial

WITH the jury panel of 108 men exhausted, Pat Whitaker, defense counsel of the three police-Klansmen charged with the murder of Joseph Shoemaker, pleads for a change of venue. To gain a more favorable location for the trial, Whitaker is using all his political influence—and he has long been "one of the boys" in Tampa. In the past years, he managed to be in on almost every political deal which promised a profit; moreover, he is Mayor Chancey's brother-in-law. Whitaker would prefer to have the cases tried in Polk County, for there the Ku Klux Klan dominates, there Fred Bass has influence: the same Fred Bass who knew Frank Norman, another labor leader murdered by the Klan.

The fact is that the three police-Klansmen in Tampa are on the defensive. The move to transfer the trial to Fred Bass' bailiwick is an indication that the defense is no longer sure that political pull or the mere formality of a trial will assure an acquittal. William Green, president of the A. F. of L., has demanded a fair and impartial trial. Pressure grows, not only from workers and liberals in Tampa but throughout America that floggers and terrorists turned murderers should be prosecuted to the full extent of the law. The Southern ruling class—and their hired floggers—feel the wrath of the masses of people in the South and in other sections who demand conviction of the guilty.

From Heywood Broun

CIRCUMSTANCES have prevented Heywood Broun, President of the American Newspaper Guild, from sending his contribution to this issue in time for publication. In its absence he has sent us the following communication:

"One of the things which have held back the organization of white-collar workers has been the phrase itself. However sound it may be from an economic standpoint to distinguish workers of hand and brain, it is idle to accentuate such differences within the trade-union movement. It seems to me that one plays into the hands of the craft unionists when he begins to deal with such phrases as white-collar workers. The Newspaper Guild has learned both in Newark and Milwaukee that it needs and wants support on the broadest possible mass front. White-collar strikes are seldom if ever won until the white collar is forgotten.

"In the beginning newspapermen were told that they should not organize because they were all geniuses and highly individualistic. That attitude went by the board. But there remained the belief that newspaper work, although a craft, was so highly special that it could not fit into organizational forms. The truth of the matter is that a very large portion of newspaper work is routine. The craft needs both skilled and unskilled workers. It belongs essentially within the ranks of industrial unionism. When newspaper plants are organized vertically we shall all have forgotten that useless and snooty phrase, white-collar workers."

New Masses

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Middle Class and a Farmer-Labor Party

DAVID RAMSEY

THE RISE of political reaction in this country can be traced to the determination of the big bankers and industrialists to divert mass discontent into safe channels and to harness the rebellious energy of the American people to their own selfish ends. We see the first signs of fascist movements whose aim is to convince the middle class groups that their real foe is not monopoly capitalism but labor. The argument is made that if the workers were forced down to lower living standards, then the poverty-stricken sections of the middle class would again be prosperous. Reaction poses as the friend of the middle class, and deliberately makes appeals to every ingrown prejudice and stimulates every illusion, in the hope of turning them away from their own true interests. The monopolists who own and rule this country try to pit the middle class against labor by claiming that labor is the cost of relief which makes taxes so high. They try to create antagonisms among the farmers by saying that it is union labor which is responsible for the high prices of manufactured products. And at the same time they blame the high cost of living on the farmers so as to make the workers feel that it is the farmer who benefits from high food prices.

Thus, the Liberty League—the center of organized reaction in the United States—poses as the friend of the worker, farmer and the city middle-class person by alternately blaming the misery of one upon the greed of the other. The reactionaries are making a special drive to line up the middle class behind their program. They pose as the apostles of all middle-class virtues. They center their appeals around the defense of liberty, democracy and small property. They urge a crusade against the "tyranny" of the labor unions which, they claim, is encouraged by the Roosevelt administration. The Liberty Leaguers conceal from their middle-class audiences that it is the monopolies and big banks which are responsible for their present conditions. It was the Liberty Leaguers, as the heads of the big trusts, who threw thousands of technicians and office personnel into the streets. It was they who foreclosed on mortgages, and drove the small business man into bankruptcy.

Instead, the Al Smiths and the other spokesmen of the Liberty League place the responsibility on "the communistic features" of the New Deal. Through this tactic, reactionaries hope to cash in on the natural resentment of the people against the New Deal, and use it to defeat Roosevelt. At the same time, they hope to blacken Communism with the failures of the Administration and make it the scapegoat for every evil.

Roosevelt also makes special appeals to the middle class. He proclaims himself as a follower of "the middle way," and uses many slogans against the vices of "entrenched greed" taken from the arsenal of the progressive revolt against the trusts at the beginning of this century. The administration even has a wing composed of middle-class intellectuals, like Tugwell, who have as their special function the job of convincing middle-class people that the New Deal is their program and that Roosevelt is fighting for their aspirations.

Can the distressed sections of the middle class gain anything from following the lead of the Liberty League? One of the Liberty League's primary objectives is to curtail free speech and destroy civil liberties, those traditional middle-class ideals. It is the ally of Hearst, who is carrying on an offensive against teachers and educators with the aim of coordinating all cultural and educational activity along the lines laid down by the Nazis. This would involve the destruction of the present school system, it would throw tens of thousands of school teachers out of employment.

The Liberty Leaguers carry on bitter attacks against all militant middle-class organizations, like the American Newspaper Guild, for attempting to better the conditions of working journalists. When it clamors for a balanced budget the Liberty League has in mind cutting off all relief, including the pittance now given to those professionals and intellectuals on W.P.A. projects. In their efforts to organize the decay of American capitalism, the Liberty Leaguers plan to lower the living standards of 90 percent of the population. If carried out, this would mean ruin for hundreds of thousands of middle-class people whose functional skills can be utilized only in a society enjoying a high standard of living. The goal of the Liberty League is the destruction of everything which these middle-class people desire from society.

Have these middle-class people anything to gain from following Roosevelt for another four years? The experiences of the New Deal provide a conclusive answer. The New Deal speeded up the process of trustification and brought on the bankruptcy of thousands of small merchants and shopkeepers. It did little or nothing to protect the small farmer from losing his land. Only a fraction of the unemployed intellectuals and professionals were given relief jobs. The latter have learned from bitter experience that the government does not make any subtle distinctions between white collars and denim overalls in its attacks on relief standards and in the imposition of humiliating conditions for relief applicants.

Does this mean that the average middle-class person can do nothing but vote for a Republican candidate as a protest against the New Deal, or stay home on election day as a protest against both old parties? To take either of these two courses would mean playing the game of the rulers. That is their hope. They want not only middle-class people but also the workers to go through the old fruitless procedure of voting for the outs and voting against the ins. Both old parties have the same goal—preserving American capitalism. They may sometimes differ on tactics, but they both agree that it is the people who must pay for all the economic and social costs of the crisis.

HOWEVER, there is an alternative for these middle-class people. A movement is under way which fights for all those who have got a raw deal from capitalism. This is the movement to build a Farmer-Labor Party as the political instrument for stopping the advance of reaction and for bettering the economic conditions of the masses of people. The Farmer-Labor Party movement has not arisen from the speculations of a few radicals. It has developed out of the life-needs of the American people. It represents a breakaway from the old capitalist parties and to some extent is based upon the recognition that capitalism is dying.

Such a Farmer-Labor Party would be a fighting alliance of workers, farmers and city middle-class groups. It would champion their common interests and work to carry out a program to meet all their economic, social and political needs. All those who have to bear the burdens of the crisis can unite in such a party for the joint defense of their own immediate interests. The Farmer-Labor Party would be composed of the trade unions, of farm organizations, of organizations of middle-class groups and the unemployed, and would include the Communists, Socialists, and liberals and progressives of every shading. Such a coalition party would be the political expression of a wide peoples' front against reaction and its plans for war.

A Farmer-Labor Party would inherit the best traditions of the middle-class revolt against monopoly capitalism. It would struggle for those very ideals which make up the so-called American dream: greater economic security, a peaceful world, and the development of a higher civilization. It would fight for those democratic rights which have always loomed large in the middle-class mind. It would fight against the enemy of the oppressed sections of the middle class—the big bankers and industrialists. If the fight against Wall Street is to be successful this time, if reaction is to be curbed, then the

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old fight of the middle class must be carried out in common alliance with the working class.

The middle class has much to gain from such a movement. The Farmer-Labor Party would lead the struggle for higher salaries, and for social, old age and unemployment insurance for everyone. It would work to expand the educational system so that all teachers could have jobs. It would attempt to increase all social services, so that unemployed doctors and other professionals could earn a livelihood and at the same time give humanity the benefits of their skill. It would work for the eradication of slums, for the building of libraries, for the construction of playgrounds, so that the architects could do the work which their training fitted them for and not collect nickels in subway stations. It would open up the closed factories, so that technicians and the lower ranks of the managerial personnel could find jobs again. It would protect the home of the small man. It would fight to get fair prices for the farmers and would protect them from the mortgage sharks and loan banks.

This is a program which the American people need. It is a program and a party around which millions can be rallied for immediate struggles, whatever their differences on questions concerning the abolition of capitalism and the building of a new social order.

Many people think that such a party is desirable, but do not believe that the leading role must be played by labor. But no other class can have the leading post in the anti-capitalist movement. Working-class leadership arises out of the very structure of capitalism. The middle class consists of heterogeneous units having antagonistic economic interests. There is a wide gulf between the propertiless members of the lower middle class and the higher salaried personnel, between the rich farmer and the poor farmer, between the well-to-do manufacturer and the small shopkeeper.

The vacillating character of the middle class results from this disunity of interests. Its upper layers are in contact with the big capitalists; they are their main social and political props. The lower layers are being proletarianized and thrust down into the ranks of the working class. Their interests dovetail with those of the workers. Consequently, there is no basis for joint action by middle-class groups, since the interests of one are opposed to the interests of the other. They must follow the lead of the capitalists, or join with the workers in a common fight against the capitalists. The working class is the largest group in American society, comprising about three-quarters of all those gainfully employed. It has a homogeneity of interests and a latent strength which makes it the most powerful force in the struggle against capitalism.

Unless labor plays the leading role there cannot be a successful fight against the threat of fascism. No movement which is not based on the working class can hope to challenge the supremacy of the capitalists. Certain middle-class spokesmen, like Stuart Chase, have developed the idea that it is the middle class which should lead the fight against capitalism. But since no middle-class group has interests identical with another group, they cannot lead themselves, let alone lead a people's movement. The independent role of the middle class can exist only in the imagination of certain intellectuals. The theory, when carried out in practice, gives the big capitalists the opportunity of mobilizing the middle class as fascist shock-troops against labor.

In all countries, the capitalists and their spokesmen play up the concept of the dominant role of the middle class. They do so to keep those sections of the middle class which are the natural allies of the workers from joining an anti-capitalist alliance and in this way they build up a mass basis for fascism. Some liberals and Socialists believe that fascism is a middle-class dictatorship. It is nothing of the sort. In Germany the middle classes form the main social basis of fascism. The character and aims of the fascist dictatorship, however, are not middle-class, but capitalistic. Fascism is the open dictatorship of big business; the fight must be against the capitalists, not against those members of the middle class whom they dupe and who do their dirty work.

The Farmer-Labor movement in this country has already caused much discussion among middle-class groups. The most prevalent attitude is that of the large group of liberals which supports the Roosevelt administration. They admit the New Deal has brought no benefits to the American people, but they claim that if Roosevelt were defeated it would open the way for triumphant reaction. Advocates of the lesser evil, they prefer Roosevelt because he is a smaller dose of poison than a Liberty League candidate. These people have given the Administration a blank check of approval, thus making it easier for Roosevelt to give way to the pressure of the reactionaries.

A second school of liberal opinion realizes the necessity for a Farmer-Labor Party, but tries to exclude Communists from the movement. The inclusion of the Communists, however, is the best guarantee that the Farmer-Labor Party would really be a fighting coalition of all who are sincerely opposed to reaction. Keeping the Communists out of the movement would mean accepting the red-baiting attitude of Hearst and the Liberty League. The Communists are rooted deep in the labor movement and when the trade unions participate in a Farmer-Labor Party there will be Communists working there. The real issue is that these people can either work with the Communists for the best interests of the American people, or they can capitulate to the threats of Hearst. In the latter event, after the reactionaries have attacked the Communists, they would then go on to attack Socialists, liberals and even old-fashioned progressives.

A third group has come to the conclusion that nothing short of an alliance between middle-class liberals and progressives, farmers and trade unionists, Socialists and Communists, can keep fascism from triumphing in this country. Their attitude to the Farmer-Labor Party is similar to the Communist concept of a people's front against fascism and war. It has already been advocated by the liberal weeklies and is making headway throughout liberal ranks.

Many people who think that a Farmer-Labor Party is necessary in the United States, are still not convinced that such a party is needed in 1936. They maintain that the Farmer-Labor Party would merely ensure victory for the Republicans. But Roosevelt has given in to reactionary pressure on every point. To re-elect him would only give him more leeway to arrange a four-year "truce" which would benefit big business.

The main hope of checking the drive of reaction is through a Farmer-Labor Party. It would not only take voters away from the Democratic Party but it would draw heavily from the ranks of the Republicans. Roosevelt cannot hope to win the support of those who are disillusioned with the New Deal. But the Farmer-Labor Party, by giving these people the opportunity to cast a solid vote against reaction, would weaken the Republican candidate.

A Farmer-Labor Party could lighten the burden of taxes. It could defend the people against fascism. It could work for the maintenance of peace throughout the world. But it could not stop the decay of the capitalist order. The only ultimate solution for the crisis of the capitalist system is Communism. A Farmer-Labor Party would be a step in this direction. It would educate the American people in the fundamental lessons of the class struggle. And from this school of experience they would graduate into the ranks of the revolutionary movement.

Just as Communism is the only ultimate solution for capitalist anarchy, so is it the only solution for the problems of middle-class people. The Webbs in their two monumental volumes have given eloquent testimony to this fact and have shown that in the Soviet Union the intellectuals, the professionals and the small man are not frustrated by the chains of capitalist relations, but realize all their creative potentialities.

But at the moment the important job is to organize all those who stand for peace, progress and economic betterment into the ranks of the Farmer-Labor Party. Middle-class people, especially in small towns, can play a very important role in building the movement, both as individuals and as members of fraternal and political organizations. Especially are the farmers important as a basic component of this coalition of all those who toil by hand or brain. The best answer to those who claim that American middle-class people are the hopeless victims of capitalist deception is for the majority of the middle class to endorse and support the Farmer-Labor Party.

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United Action for Social Security

MARY VAN KLEECK

"RECOVERY" without security is the present experience in America. On March 4 the Secretary of Commerce issued in Washington a statistical table. Its purpose, as described in The New York Times, was "to support his contention of broad business recovery in three years of the Roosevelt Administration." Compared with 1923-25, industrial production was at 99, and factory employment only 85, showing apparently increased productivity, i.e., increased speed-up, for the average worker. Factory payrolls, however, were at 72.2, and cash income from farm marketings, excluding benefit payments, was at 69, compared with the average in the five years ending in 1929. Profits from utilities were at 88.7, but freight-car loadings, indicating actual marketing of products were at 70, and contracts for building homes at only 25. As production and profits increase, the measures of insecurity are underscored. Reemployment does not keep pace with production; earnings are not advanced in proportion to prices; homes are not being constructed; and in general unemployment and lowered standards of living characterize the economic situation.

The insecurity of the working class is further emphasized by the drive of big business against trade-union organization. If employed workers strike to prevent further wage-cuts or to advance present rates, their lack of reserves undermines their power of endurance in a strike; and from the masses of unemployed are drawn unwilling strike-breakers, while all the apparatus of the blacklist and discrimination against workers for trade-union activities is put into operation.

The hoped-for programs of social insurance and relief are proving to be will-o'-the-wisps. States and municipalities are unable to carry the load of cash relief turned back to them by the federal government. Works projects are curtailed. The federal budget is to have only a postscript for relief expenditures. The social-insurance program leaves many occupations uncovered, even in the theory of the present act, and only a small group of states have as yet enacted laws to match the federal act. That is to say, the federal taxes upon payrolls have already become operative, but no benefits can be paid to the unemployed until state legislation provides the machinery for the payment of benefits to those who may lose their jobs after the period of two years when "reserves" are being built.

Supreme Court decisions declare against the right of the federal government to prescribe wages, hours and working conditions for industrial workers; or to make benefit payments to farmers. For youth, neither jobs nor cash payments are made available. For the aged, no adequate program of pensions has been enacted; the federal law depends upon state legislation, as in other parts of the so-called Social Security Act.

Even more clearly than at the lowest point in the economic crisis, insecurity is revealed as the common problem of the people, calling for united action by all of them—farmers, industrial workers, professional and white-collar workers, youth and housewives. Small businessmen and the self-employed share with all these other groups the uncertainty of tomorrow's means of livelihood.

Out of the economic situation and the revelation of the inadequacies of all the promises of the New Deal emerge the outlines of a program of united action which finds its coordinating center in the one objective of finding security. On the one hand this is a program calling for legislation or governmental action, and on the other it demands organization of special groups working together for a common objective.

The legislative program of today is characterized by the definiteness of the proposals put forward in legislation, as compared with the mere set-up of tentative principles two or three years ago.

In the newly-drawn Workers' Social Insurance Bill (introduced into the Senate by Senator Frazier as S. 3475, and into the House by Congressman Lundeen as H.R. 9680) the earlier draft of the Lundeen Bill has matured and developed into a comprehensive program of social insurance embodying all branches of insurance and putting forward basic principles of taxation for social purposes. It sharply contrasts with the Social Security Act, in that it calls for a pay-as-you-go plan on a federal basis, compensating all workers for unemployment out of general taxation, while setting up as a principle the plan of augmenting available funds through higher income taxes for individuals and through taxing the accumulated surpluses of corporations. The Social Security Act, in contrast, sets up only the machinery of federal taxation, which is not in reality a charge upon the federal government, but only a burden upon payrolls and upon consumers, while only through state legislation varying from state to state do any benefits become available for the unemployed. The new proposals for taxation touch only future corporation surpluses and not past accumulations. Nor do they propose higher individual income taxes. The whole vital subject of health insurance was left out of the social-security program, but is included in the Frazier-Lundeen Bill. In addition, that bill sets up for the first time in any country an adequate social-insurance plan for the self-employed, including small businessmen and professional workers who receive no salary. The aged are covered in a federal pension plan. Youth is included in the provisions for paying unemployment insurance to all who are available for work but unable to obtain it.

The immediate needs for relief are elaborated in the Marcantonio Relief Bill (H.R. 11186) put forward by joint action of the National Unemployment Council and the Workers' Alliance, and drawn at their request by a committee of the Inter-Professional Association. It calls for immediate provision for cash relief and for continuance of works projects, combined with the setting up of standards for relief, which is wholly new in governmental relief programs in the United States. In the American Youth Act the demands of young men and women have been formulated, with provision for the opportunity to carry on their education with the assistance from federal funds, together with a plan for employment.

The formulation of these legislative programs is in itself the result of the development of organizations aiming to secure action. Various professional groups are undertaking the task of economic protection in their own vocations. The Inter-Professional Association at the recent convention in Washington established itself as a center for united action by all these groups in formulating and promoting legislative programs for social insurance, relief and the preservation of civil liberties. The American Youth Congress and the now unified American Student Union give organizational form to the demands of students and young men and women as they come out from the schools and colleges. These organized groups in the professions serve as rallying points for the middle class as a whole, looking toward new support for the industrial workers and farmers in their organizations. Out of the possibilities of this cooperation of professional workers and the middle class with all workers, America is beginning to sense the possibility of an effective struggle against fascism.

The whole movement in the United States for security, however, is weak in comparison with the tremendous need for effective action. It is stronger for securing their fulfillment. In every profession those concerned with economic protection constitute only a very small minority. Professional workers as a whole remain indifferent to the needs for common action. The great majority are either hostile or unthinking in their attitude toward the struggles of the trade unions and the farmers. Indifferent and disillusioned in their attitude toward political parties, pro-

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workers and the middle class are ..eless drifting toward a national elec- without conscious efforts to promote the anization of a national Farmer-Labor :ty.

Moreover, the programs which have been :cribed all center in provisions for mere .mpensation for insecurity. Except as they .timulate and coordinate organized action by workers in all occupations, they do not touch the essential elements of a program for security. Basically this calls for the development of a planned economy founded upon the maximum utilization of America's productive capacity.

It is clear that floods and dust storms are not "acts of God," but evidences of the ruthless exploitation of the forests under private ownership, and the pressure upon the farmer of debts, mortgages and the disproportion between agricultural and industrial prices, which force upon him the wasteful cultivation of the soil. The recovery figures quoted at the beginning of this article, with the pitifully inadequate provision for construction of new homes and the low level of factory payrolls, compared with industrial production, are symptoms of problems which lie too deep for remedy through social insurance or relief. They are the evidence of inevitable chaos. They pose for professional workers and the middle class the need to study what is involved in a planned utilization of America's productive capacity.

The beginnings of planning for social security were made by a committee of professional workers and technicians, in preparation for the conference of the International Industrial Relations Institute held in New York in November, 1934. The results were published under the title *On Economic Planning*. The work was important as indicating the logical conclusions to be drawn from technicians' study of the reasons for the blocking of their own professions. As the result of the work of this group, the conclusion was drawn that only by assuming socialization of production could a planned economy be envisaged as a reality for America.

It is time to rally professional workers once again to a many-sided analysis of the present maximum productive capacity of America, assuming as a prerequisite the socialization of all industrial processes. Such study is essential to supplement the immediate activity centering around social insurance and relief. Otherwise, the objective of security becomes an illusion. It is possible to conceive of stability based on low standards of living. Indeed, this is the program of fascism. Social security for America demands the maximum utilization of its productive capacity. As legislative programs for relief and social insurance have become more definite within the past few months, similar definiteness is needed in an analysis of the American economy and its potentialities. United action for social security in its real sense can command the alliance of all workers, and is indeed the basis for unity in America against both war and fascism.

Middle Class and War

MICHAEL GOLD

MANY of my generation, surely, will remember as vividly as I do a certain New Republic editorial which appeared soon after Woodrow Wilson had declared war on Germany. It was titled, "Who Willed the War?" and if the Museum of Capitalist Decadence is still functioning at Commonwealth College in Arkansas, I would recommend that they post this famous editorial in a conspicuous place in their Chamber of Intellectual Horrors.

Today a great many respectable Americans know and say openly that it was J. P. Morgan and other bankers who willed America's entry into the first world war. In 1917, however, only working-class Socialists, anarchists and I.W.W. were keen and bold enough to say this. Twenty years in Leavenworth was the reward usually received from the government for such untimely brilliance. The official theory then was that the American people had willed the war.

But The New Republic group of liberal ntellectuals, led by Walter Lippmann, then suave young Harvard genius just embark- ng upon his remarkable career of oppor- unism, differed both with the Department Justice theorists and the Marxians as to ho had willed the war.

Soon after war was declared, and at a ment when all the pacifist and working- ss anti-war groups were plunged in gloom confusion, that famous New Republic orial appeared. It was lyric in tone, a n of triumph; a long, collective editorial threw its collegiate mortarboard in the nd leaped joyously around the inspiring conflagration of a world war. It crowed and sniggered, it was drunk with excitement, this manifesto of our best liberal minds; and it shocked the rest of us as much as if a respected grandmother were suddenly to turn public prostitute.

For The New Republic group, reflecting as they did the mind of thousands of college professors, businessmen, lawyers and other middle-class people, did not regard America's entrance into the war as a calamity, but as a glorious victory for justice and liberalism.

More than that; they esteemed it as a victory for their own liberal group, a demonstration that liberals ruled the nation. It was not the bankers who had willed the war, they said, nor had the American people willed it. No, they exulted fiercely, it was the small and chosen minority of *liberal intellectuals* who had willed the war!

Looking back more calmly at the period and trying to understand it without nausea and contempt, one sees that within certain limits, The New Republic was right. Capitalist interests cannot carry on a war, any more than they can set up a fascist regime, without first finding a mass base. Their fertile soil seems to be somewhere in the middle class, in war as in fascism and for much the same causes. But how can they win these middle-class masses? Bankers, as is notorious, have no brains out of their counting-houses. Furthermore, they are universally distrusted and must work under the rose. They need demagogues, ideologists, press agents to be their front-men. And they find these in sufficient plenty among the intellectuals, sad to state; since certain intellectuals know the democratic shibboleths that win the mass and are therefore more effective than a conservative intellectual.

So one finds that "great" liberal, George Creel, heading America's propaganda bureau, with a large staff of certain intellectuals, including Ernest Poole, Norman Matson and others (they prided themselves on carrying Socialist cards and boring from within). It was these noble souls who spread the horrible atrocity lies that whipped up the war and lynch spirit of the American people. They entered government bureaus in Washington by the hundreds and wrote articles hailing the control by government over war materials as a step to socialism, much as Mussolini is now calling his own war preparations a form of socialism.

Yes, the liberal intellectuals flocked to war-time Washington enthusiastically, just as they did in the early days of the N.R.A.; there was much the same atmosphere of goofy optimism and opportunistic rationalization. And they succeeded in selling the war to the middle class.

These "liberal" intellectuals proved to be the bell-wethers who led the lower middle class into the war. Some of them even suffered delusions of grandeur and believed that they had "willed the war." One can grow indignant about them and it is true that they were and are a peculiarly venal, cowardly and will-less lot, on whom Randolph Bourne wrote a sufficient epitaph.

What I should like to examine for the moment, however, are the conditions that

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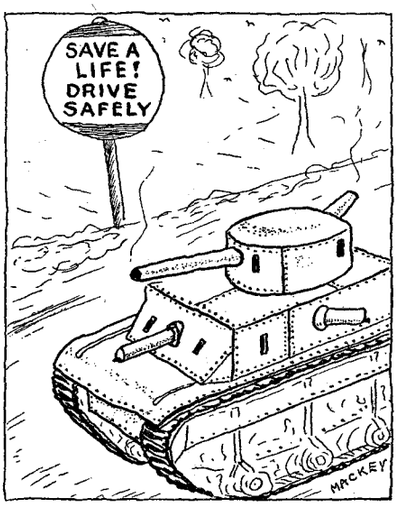
make some middle-class people so susceptible to war-mongering by the trained-seal intellectuals. It is a universal phenomenon that can be observed in every land. The most striking example in recent history was seen in the early days of the Russian Revolution, in the bourgeois phase of Miliukov and Kerensky. During this period the Russian people were split into two camps; the capitalists, on one hand, were grouped in a strange united front with certain liberals and Socialist intellectuals, to demand that Russia go on with the imperialist war. On the other side were the workers and peasants, deeply and completely sick of the war. A minority of Socialist intellectuals and workers, headed by Lenin, had fought the war from its beginning and were finally given power by the Russian masses in order to end the war.

The capitalists and bankers would obviously have profited if Russia could have seized Constantinople and a sea-lane to Europe for trading and empire, but what could the liberal intellectuals have gained? Yet some among them shrieked at Lenin as a German spy and flocked into the White Guard armies to fight workers and peasants who refused to go on with the unholy war.

Another example, which I take from an interesting study by two careful and authoritative Soviet students, titled *Militarism and Fascism in Japan*.

The desperate militarism and imperialism of Japan is one of the major factors in the coming of a new world war. But who supports the bankers and generals of Japan in their mad adventure; what is the mass base?

> The ous base, quantitatively speaking [say t Tanin and Yohan], that Japan's reactio inist organizations have made for th has been among the city petty bourgeoisie: the owners of small shops, small tradespeople, artisans employing a few apprentices, clerks, petty officials and young officers coming from these milieux, students, representatives of the "free professions," etc.
>
> It would be erroneous to think that the reactionary chauvinist organizations have complete sway over these elements, however—the revolution also has adherents in these circles. . . .
>
> But the crisis, which works havoc in these strata of society and breeds hatred of finance capital along with fear of the revolution, impels large groups to take extreme positions. These intermediate strata, conservative in their ideology and looking backward rather than forward even when they feel present conditions to be intolerable, are fruitful soil for the reactionary demagogues.
>
> There is no political stability here; there is only the tendency to fling themselves from one extreme to the other again and again. They are afraid of the militarists and the bureaucracy, but are an easy prey to the reactionary demagogy, because they are frightened by tales of the horrors they might expect from revolution and have allowed their heads to be turned by rainbow perspectives which await Japan when it seizes Manchuria, Shanghai, the Soviet Far East, etc. They believe faithfully there is no way out of their crisis but war and see in the army the only force —so eagerly awaited by them—which is "independent of finance capital" and at the same time capable of combating the social revolution.
>
> Among the workers and the great mass of the peasantry not a single one of the reactionary chauvinist organizations has succeeded in establishing anything like a base.



In other words, the crisis-crippled lower middle class of Japan has been led to believe, by army "Socialist" and Lippmann-like demagogues, that the Japanese army is something separate from Japanese finance-capitalism and that war and imperialist conquest will usher in a new paradise for them, better than anything that a revolution could bring them.

In an exchange of letters last year with Sigmund Freud on the causes of war, Albert Einstein said, among other things:

> Is it possible to control man's mental evolution so as to make him proof against the psychoses of hate and destructiveness? Here I am thinking by no means only of the so-called uncultured masses. Experience shows that it is rather the so-called "intelligentsia" that is most apt to yield to these disastrous collective suggestions, since the intellectual has no contact with life in the raw, but encounters it in its easiest, synthetic form—upon the printed page.

Professor Einstein, like many worthy pacifists, here makes the mistake of regarding war as due only to psychological forces—as an animal atavism in human nature. No doubt this is an important factor in the conduct of wars, once they have been started by those who profit by them. But why do these same "atavistic" middle-class intelligentsia shudder so much at the "horror" of a revolution and rush so eagerly into a world war?

I think the answer is, that the lower middle class is led by the bell-wether demagogues to expect many advantages to itself from a war and none from a revolution.

In the first honeymoon stages of the war sections of the middle class are enthusiastic. Some of their sons fill the officer camps and savor the sweet illusion of power over the anonymous mass of working-class privates. There is always, too, a business boom during this period; prices rise, little factories are commandeered and earn enormous profits, all kinds of government jobs are opened to the middle-class jobless.

Finance capital needs the lower middle class badly during a war, as during the establishment of a fascist regime, throws many a sop, both oratorical and to this large and important group.

But it is after the war that the pi must be paid and that the middle class wa up to find that far from "making the wor safe for democracy," or "making England land fit for heroes to live in," it has ruine itself.

The late world war resulted in an inflation in Germany that wiped out the lower middle class there as effectively as if French bombers had erased their cities. A world depression followed that created, in England, millions of the so-called "new poor," middle-class people robbed by finance capital of their savings and incomes. France, too, has felt the crisis; and Italy, Japan and America. What did our own lower middle class finally gain from our entry into the war? A soldier's bonus for some and a place on the relief rolls for most. Not even an unsuccessful revolution in America would have lowered the living standard of the lower middle class as did the late war.

Will things be as easy for the Wall Street bell-wethers as in the last crusade? No, I believe, for millions of lower middle-class people have become proletarianized during six years of the present crisis. They have become as cynical as most exploited workers have generally been about upper-class chauvinist rhetoric. A starving man doesn't leap to arms when a Wall Street bugler tells him to make the world safe for democracy. Instead, he is apt to growl, "Why in hell haven't you first made the world safe for me and my kind?"

Living in this inferno of unemployment, a deadly, gray, unheroic world of torture that kills as surely as any war, the American lower middle class is beginning to lose its fear of revolution. They know it is better than what is happening today in millions of American farms and tenement houses. Many of these people have lost all illusion of ever again making a bourgeois "career" for themselves. Even in such middle-class movements as the Townsend old-age plan, the Epic and Utopian movements, one finds a revolutionary-minded distrust of Wall Street and its government. No, the Walter Lippmanns will not find it so easy to "will" another war for this new American people, scarified and reforged as they are in the hellish flames of the crisis.

A people's revolution is the logical answer to the small clique of war-makers and fascists. But the lower middle class formerly feared such a revolution and this fear, disproved by the developments in the Soviet Union, has been the nose-ring by which this great class has been led by its financial masters into the horror of war and fascism.

Since the middle class has nothing to gai by another Wall Street war it must learn ne crises of inflation, hunger and unemploymer it should learn to pick and fight its ov wars. And it is learning and will ame the Morgans and Lippmanns must d sooner or later.

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The Minds of the Middle Class

LEWIS COREY

IS THERE a middle-class mind? There is, in the sense of general ideas. But within the formal acceptance and unity of those ideas are separate minds, determined by different class-economic groupings and interests. The general ideas may find a bewildering and conflicting variety of concrete forms of expression. It is the separate minds of the middle class that are decisive.

People who speak of the "mind" of the middle class stress the general ideas of the class. But most of those ideas are held by the great majority of Americans still under traditional influence. The "classless" ideal is especially emphasized: Americans are not class-conscious, there are no classes and the class struggle is a myth created by the Marxist imagination: hence fundamental social change must come from "classless" action and "national unity." Yet the people who preach those ideas contradict themselves: they speak of a classless America while insisting that there *is* a middle class (or classes) in between labor and capital which refuses allegiance to either. And they are, moreover, contradicted by American history and the economic set-up of today.

American consciousness has been strongly influenced by the classless ideal. But is the classless approach to American history productive of real understanding? Historians are increasingly, if in a mechanical and limited fashion, applying the class-approach to our history. The Founding Fathers were keenly aware of the existence of classes and class struggles, and they formulated policy accordingly. Was the American Revolution classless? It was a struggle of the colonial bourgeoisie against the British ruling-class, and the struggle was marked by conflicts among the colonial classes: upper and lower middle-class, farmers and artisans. Shays' Rebellion was a class revolt of small farmers against the dominant bourgeoisie. Jacksonian democracy rallied the Western farmers against the industrial, commercial and financial bourgeoisie. The Civil War was a class struggle of the Southern slaveholding class and the Northern bourgeoisie and Western farmers. Populism was an agrarian class-movement, partly supported by the workers and lower middle class in the towns. Unionism meant the emergence of labor as a class, and unions and strikes are a manifestation of class struggle.

It was in the name of classless democracy that the middle class waged some of the sharpest class struggles in American history. In spite of its classless mind, the middle class gave its own peculiar class twist to the general bourgeois ideals of liberty, equality and democracy, interpreting them in terms of widespread ownership of small productive property as independent means of livelihood.

The middle class, the independent small farmers and independent small enterprisers in the towns dominated the America of the 1820's. But the growth of industry converted the farmers into a constantly smaller proportion of the population, with the majority of them eventually becoming propertiless tenants and farm laborers. And industry itself was increasingly absorbed within the control of large-scale corporate enterprise. These developments were aggressively resisted by the middle class of small independent enterprisers, but resistance was overwhelmed by the onsweep of monopoly capitalism.

Under the impact of these economic changes the mind of the middle class began to change. It began to modify its ideals of economic and political individualism. It demanded limitation of free competition to help the small enterpriser and an increase of state power to realize the same end. It accepted state capitalism and imperialism. And, in addition, the mind of the middle class was split asunder by a change in the social-economic composition of the class. The dwindling remnants of small enterprisers clung to small property and its ideals, against monopoly, while an increasing majority of the middle class, the multiplying groups of salaried employes and professionals, had no economic stake in those ideals and in the struggle against monopoly. Separate minds began to develop and to clash.

Monopoly capitalism made the aspiration to ownership increasingly unrealizable and converted the majority of the American people into propertiless dependents on the property of a small minority: today, not much more than 15 percent of all persons gainfully occupied secure their livelihood wholly or mainly from the ownership of productive property. And monopoly capitalism has finally stratified classes (see table). Nearly three-fifths of the gainfully occupied are in the working class of wage-workers. The farmers are a small minority and half of them are propertiless. Only a small proportion of the middle class is composed of enterprisers, of businessmen and independent professionals; the great majority is composed of salaried employes, including salaried professionals.

Class	*Number*	*Per-cent*	*Number*	*Per-cent*
Wage-Workers*.....	5,600,000	44.8	30,250,000	59.3
Farmers †	4,500,000	36.0	7,400,000	14.5
Middle Class **.....	2,300,000	18.4	13,000,000	25.5
Salaried	600,000	4.8	10,300,000	20.2
Enterprisers	1,700,000	13.6	2,700,000	5.3
Big Bourgeoisie	100,000	0.8	350,000	0.7

* Including hired farm laborers and salespeople in stores.
† Including laborers working on home farms.
** Middle class as usually and broadly defined, including all lower-salaried employes and professionals who are economically part of the working class.
Source: Lewis Corey, *The Crisis of the Middle Class.*

There is still, in the sense of general ideas, a middle-class mind. But the concrete forces underlying those ideas create at least three "minds" in the middle class. There is the "mind" of the surviving independent enterprisers: they are, because of their relation to production, dominated by the idea of restoring, or at least preserving, the ownership of small productive property. There is the "mind" of the upper layers of salaried employes, mainly managerial: they are dependent on monopoly capitalism and accept and defend all its relations. And there is the "mind" of the masses of lower-salaried employes and professionals: it is dominated, within the limits of the old middle-class ideals, by their propertiless, dependent condition, their job consciousness and the performance of functional services.

The masses of lower-salaried employes and professionals are not economically part of the middle class, although they may think so because of tradition. They own no productive property, they must sell their labor power on the job (as much as the wage-worker) in order to live, and their earnings are at the proletarian level; the final destruction, by the depression of the 1930's, of their employment security and privileges has completely revealed that the masses of lower-salaried employes and professionals are a new proletariat. The old ideological lumber in their minds must be thrown out, for it was used to build a house in which they no longer live. As part of the working class, lower-salaried employes and professionals must form unions, engage in collective bargaining and in strikes, become one with the labor movement. The middle-class "mind," and there are "radicals" who accept this, deplores unionism and strikes; our answer is to broaden unionism and strikes to include lower-salaried employes and professionals, for that means the growing of an economic backbone. Alone, in the struggle to improve conditions on the job, the masses of lower-salaried employes and professionals are practically helpless; within the labor movement they can be a mighty power.

Destruction of the old middle-class America and transformation of the middle class itself are results of the change from the old economic individualism to the new economic collectivism. Industry today is dominated by collective forms of economic activity: individual enterprise is an anachronism, while all its social relations still prevail. Monopoly grows more and more powerful, the state performs more and more economic tasks to prevent the collapse of decaying capitalism. Collectivism is identified with the high productivity of industry, with its capacity to produce abundance, an abundance that threatens to strangle capitalism and must be "planfully" limited to protect capitalist profit: which means that capitalism has

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reached its objective economic limits. At the same time the objective limits of capitalism are apparent from another angle: collectivism is the economic basis of socialism, of collective ownership of industry and collective appropriation of the fruits of industry.

A crisis is created in the minds of the middle class by the capitalist and socialist aspects of collectivism. Those minds may cling to an older ideal of individualism, but individualism now represents merely the freedom of the monopoly bourgeoisie and its state to crush the economic and cultural individualism of the masses of the people. All economic changes and class struggles become articulate in the minds of people, in the realm of social consciousness. What is happening to the minds of the middle class?

The "mind" of the old middle class of independent enterprisers is opposed to collectivism, capitalist or socialist. But collectivism and the crushing of small enterprise are incontrovertible facts. Hence the "mind" of the old middle class, as it clings to property, thinks in terms of compromise and survival, moves toward state capitalism and fascism. That "mind" sheds all its old progressive ideals and becomes wholly reactionary.

The "mind" of the upper layers of salaried employes, mainly managerial, accepts capitalist collectivism but categorically rejects socialism. The ideals of the old middle class were never very real to the new middle class, for they did not correspond to the hierarchical and disciplinary relations of monopoly capitalism. This class moves easily toward fascism and its totalitarian state of privilege and caste erected on the relations of monopoly capitalism.

But observe: as independent enterprisers and upper managerial employes move toward fascism, they repudiate the old ideals of the middle class. For fascism is the negation of liberty, equality and democracy: they are rejected as against "the laws of nature." This particular middle-class mind becomes a cesspool of the most reactionary ideas, passions and prejudices. It is the direct opposite of the revolutionary mind of the early middle class: a complete transformation.

The "mind" of the masses of lower-salaried employes and professionals is forced to accept capitalist collectivism and it is wholly congenial to socialism. Not only because they are exploited by capitalism, not only because their economic interests identify them with the working class and socialism, but because they are functional groups and their minds are functional minds. The clerical worker, the technician, the professional: they perform constructive craft functions and their minds are shaped accordingly. But those functions, created by capitalism, are limited and degraded by capitalism, especially in the epoch of decline and decay. The functions are liberated by socialism.

Within the class approach, Communism makes a functional appeal to the middle class. It appeals to the functional minds in the class against the exploiting minds. Communism wages war upon the reactionary exploiting traits in the middle class and accepts the progressive functional traits: precisely as the new socialist society destroys the one and magnifies the other. For the unity of manual and mental workers is, in addition to class unity, a unity of performers of useful functional services animated by the sense of workmanship which capitalism degrades and socialism liberates.

Gardner Rea

"I want to tell you all how my new integration in Buchmanism cured me of biting my fingernails."

People who speak of the "mind" of the middle class forget the diversity of minds within the class, the changes in the form of expression of their ideals, and the clash of those minds in terms of the attitude toward fundamental social change. They say: we must win over the middle class with the ideals it has. But which ideals? The middle class is rent asunder by antagonistic economic interests and the resulting antagonism of ideals. That was largely the approach of the old revisionist socialism, which met its doom in Germany: the approach of reformism and gradualism, which forgot the coming of socialism depends upon the revolutionary struggle for power. It is an approach that under appropriate conditions, may become fascism or prepare the way for fascism.

No social revolution is possible without revolutionary consciousness. There are many minds in the middle class: some must be rejected, others transformed by revolutionary consciousness. That is the answer to fascism, and the capitalist decline and decay out of which it arises. That prepares the unity of the working class of manual and mental workers in the common struggle for liberation.

And what happens to the minds of the middle class after the Communist conquest of power? Socialism liberates all that is progressive and worth retaining in the minds and activity of the middle class, as all its useful functional groups are absorbed in the community of free workers. The antagonism within the minds of the middle class is destroyed: the antagonism between their constructive and destructive elements, the functional and the exploiting. The classless ideal becomes a reality, and liberty and equality are realized in higher forms. Socialism multiplies the technical, professional and cultural services now performed by middle-class functional groups. The middle-class minds cease being middle class: in the human civilization that is socialism, they become human and universal, moving onward toward man's increasing mastery of the world and of himself.

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Pipers of Reaction

A. B. MAGIL

ON FEBRUARY 20, Owen D. Young, chairman of the board of J. P. Morgan's General Electric Co., chairman of the advisory council of the National Broadcasting Co., director of Mr. Morgan's and the Messrs. du Ponts' General Motors Corp., of the German Allgemeine Electrizitaet Gesellschaft, etc., distinguished citizen and man of affairs, turned the radiant mazda of his mind on the storms and contentions of our day.

In a speech before an intellectual audience at Rollins College Mr. Young discussed the uses and abuses of the radio, pleading for "the exercise of wise discretion" over the air.

> Freedom of speech for the man whose voice can be heard a few hundred feet is one thing [he said]. Freedom of speech for the man whose voice may be heard around the world is another. We defend them both and will to the uttermost, but we cannot be blind to the increasing dangers of carelessness or intemperance in their use.

Rising to the occasion as befits the chairman of the Phi Beta Kappa Foundation, Mr. Young illuminated his remarks with incandescent, if not too apposite, rays out of Bartlett's *Quotations,* revealing himself as a man of lofty, even though a bit irrelevant, culture. With formidable memory gems he castigated the sinners, mentioning by name Herbert Hoover, Al Smith and Senator Robinson, and appealed even to the President "for the choice word and the measured phrase."

The choice and measured voltage of Mr. Young's speech generated widespread favorable editorial comment in the better class of newspapers. It should be noted that even William Randolph Hearst joined in calling attention to "the increasing dangers of carelessness or intemperance" in the use of the radio by insisting that Earl Browder, general secretary of the Communist Party, be barred from speaking over a Columbia Broadcasting hookup.

The speech of Owen D. Young had one political meaning and only one: the gentleman on the Right, the American cousins of the Thyssens and Krupps who backed Hitler to power, realize that for the present they have overreached themselves. Al Smith's "Washington or Moscow" forensics at the Liberty League dinner has proved a billion-dollar boomerang.

Hearst is more of a stench in the nostrils than ever, and if Hoover's new ghost-writer continues to slay the New Deal with epigrams, he will just about guarantee the re-election of Roosevelt. Hence the timely sermon by the Sunday school superintendent of the House of Morgan.

But these are days when demagogy is riding a perennially bull market. Out of the ashes of the New Freedom, the American Plan and Employe-Management Cooperation arose the phoenix of the New Deal. And out of *its* ashes have come forth even more glamorous birds: Share-Our-Wealth, for example, and the National Union for Social Justice. For though it may be tactically wise at this time for certain of the right-winged gentry to put on the dignified broadcloth of Owen D. Young, none knows so well as they how desperately capitalism in crisis needs the peacock plumage of its livelier pipers of reaction.

Undoubtedly, the most persuasive and dangerous of these piping rogues was the late Huey P. Long. Long had genius and inexhaustible "drive." At the time of his death he had managed to get a stranglehold on the entire political life of Louisiana, he had a promising mass movement of national proportions under way in the Share-Our-Wealth Clubs, he was backed by the leading businessmen of his state and had made important contacts in Wall Street. Moreover, he was American to the core—what Sinclair Lewis

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calls a professional Common Man—and his particular slot-machine utopia was easy to understand, easy to sloganize and embodied in easily-swallowed capsule form traditional American ideals of security and happiness.

The assassination of Huey Long removed not only the New Deal's most troublesome gadfly, but the only man who seemed to have the dimensions and potentialities of an American Hitler.

Among those who have found the shoes of Long far too big for them are the Rev. Gerald L. K. Smith, organizer of the Share-Our-Wealth Clubs, and Governor Talmadge of Georgia. The businessmen and practical politicians who inherited the Long machine have succeeded in effectively shelving the Rev. Smith, while allowing him to let off steam. The ghost of Share-Our-Wealth marches on—and will march on so long as wealth remains the monopoly of a few—but Share-Our-Wealth as a people's crusade against the Saracens of Wall Street died with Huey Long.

Talmadge has all of Long's ambition and almost none of his ability. His is a simple mind that thinks with its fist: vigilanteism personified—and that too is something that the wearers of dignified broadcloth find useful. Talmadge is a typical product of old-fashioned aged-in-the-wood Ku Kluxism fermenting into modern fascism. He may be all kinds of a damn fool and a dud as a national figure, but the things that he stands for cannot be so easily dismissed. The political climate that breeds Talmadges is the climate of incipient fascism.

No wonder both William Randolph Hearst and the respectable Liberty Leaguers, who shied away from the radical demagogy of Huey Long, have taken "His Chain Gang Excellency" unto their bosoms. Reports persist, from apparently authentic sources, that the Liberty League came across with $5,000 for Talmadge's recent "grass roots convention" in Macon. As for Hearst, his newspapers have been the chief publicity vehicle of the Georgia governor. The New York American gave the "grass roots" rally a two-column play in 12-point type on page one, with the headline: "Jeffersonians Adopt Platform." When Hearst several months ago proposed the formation of a "Constitutional Democratic Party," his first choice for the Vice-Presidency was Talmadge.

One must admit that Talmadge would be an ideal choice for a Hearst party. He proved his mettle in the great textile strike of 1934, when he not only called out the militia, but made history as the first governor in the United States to establish concentration camps for strikers. For all of which the mill owners kicked in without stint.

And Talmadge proved his mettle again when he staged the "grass roots convention" of southern "Jeffersonian Democrats" on January 29. As a convention it was a washout and only 3,500 out of an expected 10,000 showed up, but it was probably the biggest lynch rally this country has ever seen. With the rabidly anti-Negro Georgia Woman's World setting the ideological tone and Talmadge, snarling forelock—a bit Hitleresque—red suspenders and all, sounding the keynote in a tirade against the "Communist" New Deal, all that was necessary was to change the word "Negro" to "Jew," and it might have happened not here, but over there—in Nazi Germany.

And among these "Jeffersonian" storm-troopers was the shining knight of share-the-wealthism, the Rev. Gerald L. K. Smith. His program is at the opposite pole of Talmadge's—but what's in a program?

In his first year and a half in office Talmadge pardoned or paroled more than 1,000 prisoners, from petty thieves to murderers with long prison records. Among those pardoned was not Angelo Herndon.

With Huey Long out of the picture and the Talmadge boom very much of a bust, the only reactionary piper with a mass following is Father Coughlin. Like Talmadge, Coughlin flirted with Long during his lifetime, but the radio priests's political alliances are notoriously unstable. There is one man, however, with whom he appears over the course of years to have maintained close relations: William Randolph Hearst. (The semi-fascist demagogues of both the "left" and right seem to find in Hearstism a common meeting ground.) Though Coughlin and Hearst differ on some questions, they see eye to eye on a sufficient number of basic issues (Red-baiting, hatred of the Soviet Union, opposition to organized labor, extreme national chauvinism, sympathy for Hitler and Mussolini) to have made close collaboration possible.

Coughlin's great asset is, of course, his radio following. Here he is supreme. He has undoubtedly the largest regular radio audience in the world, numbering millions of listeners every Sunday. Those who may be disposed to think that Coughlin has shot his bolt might well ponder these facts: he has expanded his independent national network and is now heard from coast to coast and from Canada to the Gulf; he has just launched a national weekly newspaper, called Social Justice; and he is converting his radio lobby into a mass political organization through the formation of units of his National Union for Social Justice.

It is significant that Long, Talmadge and Coughlin have made their appeal largely to middle-class emotions, and have found their strongest support among farmers and middle-class people. Long had to fight for industrial New Orleans and never really conquered it. Talmadge likewise is in the camp of the enemy when he enters Atlanta.

In the case of Father Coughlin the lines are not so sharply drawn, but he too is primarily a middle-class messiah, with important sections of organized labor definitely hostile to him.

In a land such as ours, which knew no feudalism, where all sorts of petty-bourgeois illusions have flourished and where the labor movement, both in the economic and political fields, has been relatively weak, it is clear that the middle-class appeal, masking the aims of reaction, becomes especially sinister. Hitler used the slogans of Marxism and lifted even the name, Socialism, to win the German masses; a Father Coughlin exploits the traditions and illusions of radical agrarian populism for the same purpose.

The extension of his activities once more raises the question of the source of Coughlin's financial support. His own answer is well known: the "free-will offerings" of the radio public. But this is fantastic when the magnitude of Coughlin's expenditures is considered. The broadcasts cost, according to his own recent statement, $15,000 weekly. Thousands of copies of each of his speeches are distributed free on request, involving a huge expenditure for printing, mailing and clerical help. His newspaper, sixteen pages tabloid size, carries no advertising and is mailed without charge. He has just published a new book: *Money! Questions and Answers,* also sent gratis. He maintains a Washington office with two paid lobbyists. The organization of his Social Justice units also takes a big slice of cash. If he does it all for less than three million dollars a year, he is lucky.

The real money in the Coughlin movement is the manna that rains from the heavens of Big Business—from those sections of the capitalist class that favor the inflationary program which Coughlin advocates. This means, in the first place, the Committee for the Nation, which has retired from the public eye in recent months, but is none the less alive. There is every reason to believe that those two wise men of Wall Street, George LeBlanc, former vice-president of the Equitable Trust Co. (later merged with Rockefeller's Chase National), and Robert M. Harriss, silver speculator and member of the New York Stock Exchange, who in October, 1932, found their way to the Babe-in-the-Manger of Royal Oak and converted him into the messiah of inflation, are, together with their associates in the Committee for the Nation, providing what it takes.

But the pipers of reaction, despite themselves, also perform a positive function. Their diagnosis is wrong, their remedies are dangerous, they are quacks and shameless hypocrites, but they call attention to the fundamental maladies of our day. Certainly the New Dealers have no cause to be holier-than-thou. Without the New Deal and its trail of broken promises, there might never have been the Share-Our-Wealth Clubs and the Union for Social Justice. This is election year, but the question of which is the bigger and better circus cannot forever blot out the question of bread. There is an awakening in the land, and pipers of a new day are arising in the thousands of men and women who are moving toward farmer-labor action against threatening disaster. Therein lies the hope of America.

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The Passion for Liberty

STANLEY BURNSHAW

SINCE the days of the struggle against feudalism, the middle classes have bitterly battled for an ideal liberty. Not that they were driven by pure philosophical abstractions, nor that they set out consciously to displace a tumbling social system with a new one even dimly envisaged. The revolutionary drive of capitalism had crucially involved them in every major clash; and they stubbornly pressed their own interests and ideals at every stage of the struggle against both feudal aristocracy and big bourgeoisie of the merchant capitalists, insisting on the rights of independent small-property owners to tear down and rebuild the world.

Such an economic battle could not have been sustained without simultaneously involving other departments of living. The middle-class ideal revolved around property: the unrestricted right to own, buy and sell. But of course no basic economic change can be attempted without overhauling the whole political and cultural philosophy of its makers. If independent small-property was to conquer, all political and cultural obstacles had to be destroyed: therefore the right to resist tyranny, to free man from feudal chains, to challenge old ideas, to appeal to reason, to create a new and better world—in short, the right to revolution. The passion for liberty nourished the middle-class struggle and was nourished by it.

But with all its historical value and achievement, the middle-class ideal of liberty was limited, both in itself and in its application to other classes. The workers, for example, were for the most part excluded: they owned no property and ownership of independent productive property was the material basis of the middle-class ideal. But liberty was increasingly limited for the middle class itself. Its anomalous position as an economic unit constantly resisted its aims. The big bourgeoisie with whom the middle class logically collaborated against common enemies, celebrated every victory with an attack on its erstwhile ally. In every showdown middle-class ideals were frustrated. History subsequent to the bourgeois revolutions reads like a clinical record of middle-class devitalization while big business enterprise has grown into the colossus of monopoly capitalism.

What about the ideals? the passion for liberty, individualism, democracy? To stigmatize the middle class as an idiot group that never learns from experience is to ignore the bitter paradox of its struggle. By championing independent enterprise free from any and all restriction, the middle class actually signed over its life to big business, for unrestricted competition breeds monopoly capitalism which kills off small independent enterprise. Finally developed into a jungle law, unrestricted freedom to own and sell ends by exterminating the very interests on which it is based. Fifty years ago small farmers and small enterprisers advocated limitations, as their only salvation. Twenty years later the middle classes tried to compel the government to "protect" free competition through the very principle against which they had ceaselessly fought: restriction. But restriction would have meant the end of industrial advance. Naturally monopoly capital won.

And as monopoly capital steadily overwhelmed small property, the reality of liberty —in the concrete social sense—began to totter: its economic foundation was increasingly undermined. Little wonder that the frustrated ideal came to express itself in marginal forms. Among middle-class intellectuals: an ingrown ideal of personal liberty, an individualism separated from the reality of social relations, a form of escapism. Among artists; the right to *épater le bourgeois*. Among middle-class radicals: the right to absolute personal freedom in sex relations. How tragically puny our "American Sexual Revolution" of the 1910s and 1920s seems in the light of the epic struggle now convulsing mankind. And how bitterly ironical that the ingrown ideal of personal liberty assumed its extreme form in what is now used as the "philosophic" apologetics of fascism: Nietzscheism.

Today the middle class face the tragic dilemma of having created a frankenstein of its ideal liberty. Desperately it has had to repudiate the very material basis of its

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class ideal by demanding limits to economic freedom; and in this fact lies the overwhelming change in its philosophy. In utter contradiction of its entire ideal, it now tacitly declares that *liberty is a matter of class interests* and with its own survival in mind, demands freedom for the middle class.

But this is economically, politically and culturally impossible. A class demand presupposes a class base. If the middle class has never been a homogenous economic unity, today its base has all but collapsed. The capitalist crisis is splitting it apart, sending a minority of capitalist small-employers and higher managerial employes into the arms of the big bourgeoisie, dropping the vast majority of salaried employes and professionals to the economic level of the proletariat. To demand "middle-class freedom" as something opposed to other class-freedoms is to demand the moon. They press this fantasy who refuse to realize that as an economic contender the middle class is dead.

But the ideal of liberty and the ideals of democracy and equality are flooding with new life, for they have been taken over by the class that is rising to remake the world: the working class (with whom the economic interests of the majority of salaried employes and professionals are identified). Capitalism cannot save liberty; and as it goes through a series of steadily severer crises it is compelled to enforce more and more restrictions, until the drive for self-preservation consolidates into fascism. And then the last shred of freedom is lost. Under its naked terrorism the liberty, democracy and reason for which the middle classes fought are repudiated in all their forms.

Have America's middle-class people learned from Germany and Italy? Will they remain wrapped in an antiquated middle-class dream until they wake up in straitjackets? Will their free-speech organizations still crusade for an abstract freedom in behalf of everyone—even those who spew hate and set fire to civilization? Will the middle classes finally put into practice the hard fact which their economic collapse should have taught them: that ideals must be measured in terms of the majority of mankind?

This is the measure of socialism; and in its advance against the exploiters, in its struggles to defend liberty from the attacks of declining capitalism and fascism, the working class of manual and mental workers creates a new and larger ideal—one which must arise out of the liberty socially to control and master economic forces. The period of proletarian dictatorship, politically necessary to entrench the revolutionary advance, provides the working class and its allies with the liberty to remake the world. And to remake the life of mankind: suppressing the sterile thrust of reaction, unloosing the creative forces of progress.

For socialism is based upon the liberation of production from capitalist control. Freed from the necessity of profit-making, a new economy of plenty is made possible, in which all producers—including all the useful functional groups now in the middle class—collaborate. Wage slavery, unemployment, restriction of reason become economic, cultural and political impossibilities in a social order owned and controlled by the masses—master of their economic and cultural possessions.

With the yoke of economic want for the first time lifted from his shoulders, man will be free to develop the potentialities which life has thwarted during the centuries. No longer the monopoly of a small class or an ingrown ideal, liberty under socialism becomes universal because the social arrangements consciously promote liberty: a social ideal that liberates the mass in order that the individual may be free. Socialism will make possible at last the liberty of person, the liberty to think, the liberty to create—the liberty to create a freedom greater than the middle class dreamed. The passion for liberty becomes the dynamic force in the upward and onward movement of socialist humanity.

The Negro Middle Class

The Failure of Emancipation

LOREN MILLER

"SUPPORT each other," William Lloyd Garrison advised a convention of free Negroes in 1831. "I mean sell to each other and buy of each other, in preference to whites. This is a duty. . . . If any of your number opens a small shop do not pass it by to give your money to a white shopkeeper." Garrison's advice was not new; Negro literature of that time is replete with the lesson that there was a growing belief that the upbuilding of a Negro owning class was necessary in the fight against discrimination and racial inequalities. Nor are the reasons for that belief obscure.

Apologists for slavery predicated part of their case for the rapidly growing theory of the inferiority of Negroes on the fact that Negroes were slaves or impoverished workers; Negroes, they argued, were incapable of rising above that status. In turn, Negro leaders reasoned that a practical demonstration by Negroes of their ability to become property-holders would go a long way toward disposing the theory that God had condemned them to be hewers of wood and drawers of water. "Every Negro living well is an anti-slavery fighter," cried Samuel Ringgold Ward, a Negro Abolitionist of the 1840's. It was easy to see that those who lived well were the merchants of the North, the land-owners of the South and that ever-increasing number of professional men who ministered to the needs of those who had wealth. Negroes could live well, too, if they could attain similar positions.

But, of course, Negroes could not become merchants or professional men, or even manage large landholdings, unless they had the necessary education. A famous Negro physician wrote in 1852: "Let our young men and our young women prepare themselves for usefulness and business. The young men may enter into merchandise, trading and other things of importance; the young women may become teachers of various kinds. We mean to educate them for useful, practical business purposes . . . a people must be a business people."

These statements, which could be multiplied a thousand times, are enough to indicate that Negro leaders who urged the building of a Negro owning class rested their case largely on the argument that the advances of this class would make for the general well-being of the entire Negro people. Other factors played into the hands of these Negro business and professional men who were laying the basis for their own economic independence while they argued, perhaps believed, that they were solving the whole Negro question. The Abolitionist leaders, from Garrison to William H. Seward, were middle-class radicals who indoctrinated Negro leaders, who perforce followed them, with a firm belief in the virtues of capitalism. And there was the circumstance that free Negroes were forced to live in ghettos and were not welcome as customers of white merchants or as clients of white professional men. The Negro worker who supported the Negro merchant could hope that his aid in building the enterprise would some day result in his son's getting a position as a clerk or a superintendent; he knew that the white merchant

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would never employ his son except as a menial.

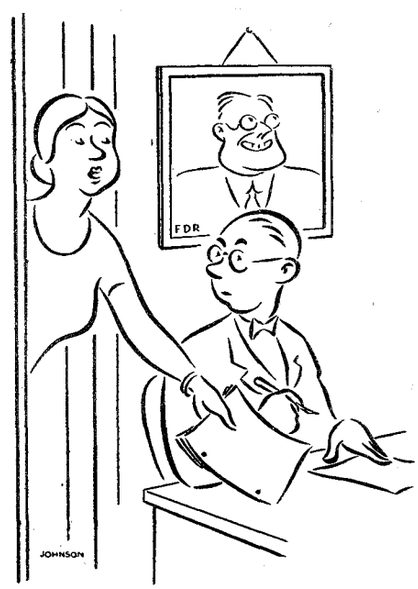
Abolitionists, white and black alike, believed, or at least hoped, that emancipation of the slaves would mean the end of the color line in America. They foresaw the time when no man could tell by the color of another's skin whether that other man was worker or capitalist. They believed in the essential democracy of America. The events of the Reconstruction blasted the Abolitionists' belief that the legally-free Negroes would be given equal economic opportunities. The preponderant majority of former slaves who remained on Southern soil became tenants or croppers while those who fled to the cities, excluded from the ranks of organized labor, became menials or unskilled workers. A new group of apologists was soon busy "proving" that Negroes were incapable of rising above the status of menial workers. Negro leaders responded with the familiar arguments of pre-Civil War days. "Society . . . defers to power. Learning, wealth and power are most potent in society . . . it is necessary that we exhibit proportionate character for learning and wealth to be respected," a Negro business man advised his hearers in 1882.

Eager to secure the learning they believed was the prerequisite to wealth and power—and an equal status in America—Negroes flocked to schools and colleges to demand classical and professional educations. Booker T. Washington was doubtful of the efficacy of this approach; he founded Tuskegee Institute in 1883 to teach Negroes that they must become skilled tradesmen and scientific agronomists. Skilled workers, he taught, could save their earnings and invest them in business institutions; skilled agronomists, he was certain, could soon become powerful landowners.

Almost seventy years after emancipation, in 1930, United States census statisticians reported that there were 28,213 Negro retail dealers in this country. There were only eighty bankers and bank officials, 511 insurance officials, 376 editors, 1,773 dentists, 3,805 physicians, 1,247 lawyers and 2,946 undertakers. All told there were only 135,925 professional persons, of whom more than ten thousand were musicians and music teachers and 54,000 were school teachers. The Negro retail dealers did less than 0.21 of one percent of the retail business of the country, despite the fact that Negroes comprised almost 10 percent of the population. The value of farms owned by Negroes was only $334,451,396, according to the same census; worse than that, there was a decline of more than $200,000,000 in the value of farms owned by Negroes from 1920 to 1930. The acreage farmed by Negroes had declined 9.3 percent in that same decade and 79 percent of the Negro farmers, in 1930, were tenants.

These figures loom up as more important when it is remembered that, until a very few years ago, Negro public opinion was united in the belief that the ownership of land, the upbuilding of a commercial class and the education of a professional group were the all important factors in the struggle for racial equality in America. The failure to achieve these ends can be traced easily: Negroes educated in professional schools returned to practice to find that popular prejudice limited their custom to Negroes. Their clientele, in turn, was desperately poor and unable to pay more than the most meager fees. Negroes who entered business found that their Negro customers could afford only the barest necessities of life. Negro white-collar workers, such as school teachers and the like, were limited to institutions for Negroes, with accompanying wage differentials. The foundations for the great fortunes, made in basic industries, were laid long before Negroes had either training or funds to grasp those opportunities. The practical result is that Negro business and professional men belong, for the most part, in the ranks of the lower middle class where they are prey to every economic ill wind that blows across the American scene in addition to the fact that they must bear all of the disabilities that are imposed on them because of their race.

The measures adopted by the Negro middle class to meet the crisis cannot be understood unless it is remembered that these Negroes, who occupy the position of middle-class folk in their relation to the whole of American life, are, at the same time, the upper class within their own group. As such, they control Negro public opinion; they own the more than 200 Negro newspapers; they control the churches and in conjunction with white politicians they dominate schools for Negroes. The Negro press, church and school are constantly utilized by Negro professional men to hammer home the lesson that the Negro who procures the services of a white professional man is a traitor to his group. A Negro newspaper remarked editorially this year that "Negro business is not conducted for profit but for the benefit of the race." Negroes are abjured to patronize Negro business in order that their sons and daughters may find employment; some of the most successful advertisements for Negro business are couched in terms of opportunities offered Negro youth rather than in superiority of the product offered. For the most part, these Negro middle-class minded folk still cling stubbornly to the belief that if civil and legal disabilities are wiped out they can somehow or other rise to the top of the heap.



Crockett Johnson

"The President's secretary says for you to file all applications for flood relief in the lower right hand drawer."

Since 1929, the mortality of Negro business institutions, for economic, not racial, reasons has been alarmingly high. Bank after bank and insurance company after insurance company has failed because they were *small banks* and *small insurance companies* and unable to resist the encroachments of larger concerns. Countless Negro professional men have been driven to charity because their clients have lost even the low-paying jobs they once held. Cut-rate dentists who once spurned Negro custom now advertise in the Negro press. Negro merchants have their largest stake in grocery, drug and confectionery stores, but the great chains are increasing in Negro communities and the Negro retailer, like other small retailers, must give way before them. These chain stores are even meeting the racial argument advanced by employing Negro clerks and managers.

Meanwhile the position of the Negro worker and farmer grows worse. Twenty percent of those receiving relief today are Negroes. In my own city, Los Angeles, more than 60 percent of the Negro population is dependent on charity. I believe that eastern cities will show even larger percentages. It is plain that these impoverished Negro workers cannot support Negro professional and business men on their doles from charity.

There are indications that the Negro people are learning these facts. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People in its new program calls for the cooperation of white and Negro workers; the National Negro Congress, meeting last month in Chicago, with its representation of Negroes from every stratum of the population, broke new ground toward concrete, progressive action. And there are other similar indications that the Negro people—workers and middle class alike—are learning that the lot of the Negro worker will not be improved until the lot of the entire American working class is bettered.

This realization must throw them into a struggle against monopoly capitalism, if the white working-class leaders prove in practice the theory that color is no consideration in the struggle.

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White Collars Organize

JOHN BUCHANAN

FACED with the fact of permanent economic crisis, no longer to be denied after six years of bitter struggle, the white-collar worker seeks to free himself from a fog of tradition, to see clearly amid a maze of inherited ideas and prejudices that conflict with the lessons of his daily experiences, to the clear cut arguments of his working-class brothers. As he moves slowly, with many jolts and stops, with many a false start and many a longing eye cast furtively back, as he progresses painfully in his gradual orientation toward a united class of toilers, toilers with hand and brain, he frequently finds himself in some pretty awkward positions. Once the orientation is completed, once the last trace of his former indifference to labor action is finally removed, he is apt to move rapidly to the Left, but, in the meantime . . .

I found a curious illustration of what may happen at the exact moment of separation of a petty-bourgeois from the ties of poverty-respectability, within a family living in Astoria, Long Island.

John, one of two brothers, had lost the small business he owned and had gone to work for his brother George, in whose store he became the only employe. At the same time he moved his family to the home of George and their mother. After a time John realized that he was being exploited. Brother George paid low wages, but he demanded high rent for John's share of the joint apartment. John found that talking it over got him nowhere. Finally he decided that his only course was to strike.

From that day on, John was to be seen every day, picketing his brother's store with a sign that proclaimed to the world that George was unfair. There were numerous attempts at arbitration but all of no avail. Failing to get John to return to work without granting his demands, George, the boss, decided to try to break the one-man strike by influence of public opinion. He began his campaign at home. It was not long before Ma began to complain bitterly. She pointed out that it took money to feed a big family, that John was not bringing in any wages since he'd quit his job, while George brought in less and less money as the strike hurt his business. Though John's wife sided with his mother, John managed to hold out for a while longer. He insisted he would not go back to work until his brother gave in. But at length Ma put her foot down. She absolutely refused to furnish strike relief. Unless John went back to work, he and his family would have to get out of the house. John had no choice but to accept defeat.

While John's quixotic action is hardly typical of what is happening to the urban middle classes of America, it illustrates the growing consciousness that the class division overrides all other allegiances, even the closest ties of family. And it illustrates the curious conflict of personal situations through which the white-collar worker must often cut his way in his struggle toward labor organization and action.

The economic crisis of the 1930's has hit the white-collar workers hard. Hundreds of thousands have been thrown into unemployment and onto the relief rolls. This includes professionals, most of whom now are salaried workers. They have been caught between the scissor-blades of falling wages and a concerted campaign to boost prices, if indeed they were lucky enough to find work at all. None of their professional organizations was able to help them materially, although a few of them became labor exchanges to meet the growing need of jobs. The course of thousands of these professional workers has been to form into trade unions and to seek affiliation with the A.F. of L. as the established body representing the labor movement in the United States. Like other white collar workers they find their only hope is to join with their brothers in the manual trades in a united struggle for social security. This movement has already brought more than 250,000 professional workers into trade unions. Much more than that number are organized in other types of white-collar unions — newspaper workers, government employes, bookkeepers, stenographers, clerks, etc.

Reflecting the history of more advanced sections of the working class, the movement draws its prime sustenance from struggle. The white-collar unionists do not cling to their imagined class-privileges for long once they are in the working-class movement. Instead of flattery and cajolement, they are greeted with abuse and slander by the bourgeois press and the other spokesmen of capitalism. They run the whole gamut of Red scares, threats, punitive dismissals, blacklisting and discrimination. They are clubbed for exercising their lawful right of assembly, they are arrested for picketing or demonstrating, jailed, framed and traduced by the august magistrates of the capitalist courts. They learn to meet every reactionary weapon that has been used against their brothers of the manual trades. With waving of flags and shouting of the national anthem, their employers try to woo them into company unions. If one thing more than any other has helped them shed their middle-class reticences, their "dignity and superiority," it has been the crude hooliganism of those capitalist-allied elements that have tried to check their movement toward a labor front.

For the expropriation of middle-class elements has not only produced a movement to the Left. There proceeds a polarization in two opposite directions. And just as the leftward movement, once begun, has moved much more rapidly than at any other period in American history, just as the white-collar trade-unionists have been quick to link their economic organization with the political objective of the working class, just so their brothers of the Right have not for long been able to keep concealed the threatening face of fascism.

No estimate of the growth of trade unionism among white-collar workers can fairly overlook the many protective associations which, while they rarely take the form of trade unions, are an integral part of the labor movement. They arise, as do the unions, out of various forms of exploitation and are often born in the throes of strike struggles. An example is the appearance of the many Tenants Leagues that were organized during the strike of 80,000 building service employes in New York. These leagues supported the demands of the workers in the buildings in which they lived, often joining the strikers on the picket line and usually taking over the organization of strike relief.

Another, related type of organization is the League of Women Shoppers. By giving aid to striking workers in the retail trade, by organizing boycotts against retail stores that refuse to pay a living wage or to recognize the right of their employes to organize, the League sets a model for a type of organization that may become one of the most powerful forces within the white-collar movement. Consumers' Cooperatives, by refusing to deal with open-shop manufacturers, are performing a similar function, and Consumers' Research, which locked out its striking workers last fall, now has a competitor in Consumers' Union, definitely linked to the labor movement.

The Labor Research Association has prepared a partial list of some 82 "White Collar and Professional Workers' Strikes, 1934 to date," of which our table on the opposite page is an abbreviation.

"Conservative figures of the U.S. Department of Labor . . . give only an indication of the actual extent of such strikes," the L.R.A. explains. The Department's figures show:

Total number of such "strikes and lockouts" for 1934: 130; for the first nine months of 1935: 91. Number of workers involved during 1934: 25,605; for the first nine months of 1935: 12,493.

Recent months show a decided increase in militant activity of these groups.—THE EDITORS.

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Some White Collar and Professional Workers' Strikes

By Labor Research Association

Begun	*Ended*	*City*	*Occupation or Firm*	*No. Involved*	*Union Leading Strike*	*Demands and/or Cause*	*Outcome*
2-7-34	....	New York	Jewish social workers	500	Assn. of Federation Workers	Restoration of 1931 salary cuts; normal salary increases	
3-8-34	....	New York	Dental technicians	600	New York Dental Technicians Equity	Conditions	Signed up 85% of industry. Complete victory.
4-6-34	4-7-34	Waterville, Me.	Tax assessors	7	Spontaneous	Not told what their salaries would be	One fired; six given same rate as last year.
6-4-34	6-8-34	New York	Macaulay Co. (book publishers)	11	Office Workers Union	Firing of union member	Won reinstatement; recognition of union
10-27-34	11-7-34	Cleveland	A. & P.	2,200	7 A.F. of L. unions, including clerks and managers union.	Union recognition	Strikers reemployed; union recognition; collective bargaining rights.
11-4-34	3-29-35	Newark, N. J.	Newark *Ledger*	46	American Newspaper Guild	8 fired for Guild membership	Strikers reinstated
11-17-34	2-2-35	New York	S. Klein (apparel)	70	Office Workers Union	Firing of union members Wage increases	Won 11 weeks' back pay
11-30-34	1-11-35	Milwaukee	Boston Store	600	Clerks, teamsters, maintenance men's union, all A. F. of L. affiliates	Wage increases	Union claimed satisfactory settlement
12-15-34	3-8-35	New York	Ohrbach's (store)	137	Office Workers Union	Conditions	Most demands granted
2-23-35	....	New York City and vicinity	James Butler (chain grocery)	400	Grocery Chain Stores Employes. Local 915. (A. F. of L.)		Lost
3-26-35	4-27-35	New York	Silver Rod (drug chain)	40	Pharmacists Union of Greater New York	Firing of 14 for union activity	Ten reinstated; 4 given up to 3 months' pay until they have secured jobs.
4-12-35	4-26-35	Chicago	Carnahan Hanson	10 (artists)		Conditions	Won 25% wage increase
5-18-35	Aug.	Brooklyn, N. Y.	Beth Moses Hospital	100	Association of Brooklyn Federation Workers	Locked out; and firing of two active in organization. Conditions	All reinstated (one case pending) same wage, no loss of seniority. Recognition of hospital and laboratory technicians' council and maintenance men's council; vacation with pay.
June, 1935		Wooster, Ohio	Central Ohio Telephone Co.	25 (operators)		Conditions	Won agreement for immediate 20% increase and promise of addition 10%
Aug., 1935		New York (three sections)	Retail Clothing Merchants Assn.	263	Retail Clothing Salesmen's Union (A.F. of L.) Local 1006	Conditions and demand for 12 month's employment	Won back pay for duration of lockout; $36 minimum weekly wages; 48-hour week; vacation with pay; full year's employment; closed shop
8-21-35	stoppage	New York	W. P. A.	1,500	City Projects Council	Delay in wage payments	Won $13 bonus for all
8-31-35	Nov.	Tacoma, Wash.	J. C. Penney Co.	86 (clerks)	Retail Clerks Intl. Protective Assn. (A.F. of L.)	Conditions	Union recognized; 40-hour-week.
9-35	one week	New York	Blynn Shoe Co.	55	Retail Shoe Salesmen's Local 1268 (A. F. of L.).	Conditions	Won union recognition; $30 weekly minimum wage
9-4-35	1-4-36	Washington, N. J.	Consumers' Research	43	Technical, Editorial and Office Assistants Union, Local 20055 (A. F. of L.)	Discharge of union president and two other union members	Militancy forced both unofficial committee and government labor board to condemn employers
9-4-35	9-8-35	New York	Burlesque girls	175	Burlesque Artists Assn.	Conditions	Won minimum wage of $22.50 in N. Y.; $25 on road; 1 day off in 14. Signed agreement
9-5-35	9-10-35	New York	Drygoods jobbers salesmen	60	Federal A.F. of L. Local	Conditions	
9-24-35	....	New York	Midwest Optical	14		Conditions	Signed agreement
10-9-35	12-24-35	New York	Amsterdam *News*	15 (Negro employes)	American Newspaper Guild	Fired for Guild membership	Won 10% wage increase; 40-hour week; closed shop
10-21-35	....	Brooklyn, N. Y.	May's (apparel)	90	Department Store Employes Local 1250 (A. F. of L.)	Firing of 2 employes for union activity; conditions	
10-24-35	3-hour stoppage	New York	Emergency Home Relief Bureau	6,000	Assn. of Workers in Public Relief Agencies	Protest against layoffs	Won temporary halt of dismissals; W.P.A. jobs for majority scheduled for dismissal
1-22-36	....	New York	Margon Corp.	250	B. S. & A. U. Local 12646; of L.); Metal Novelty Lodge, Local 1548, Intl. Assn. of Machinists.		
2-17-36	....	Milwaukee	Wisconsin *News* (Hearst)	22 (editorial)	Am. Newspaper Guild	Low wages	
3-2-36	....	Jessup, Pa.	Teachers	68		Back pay	

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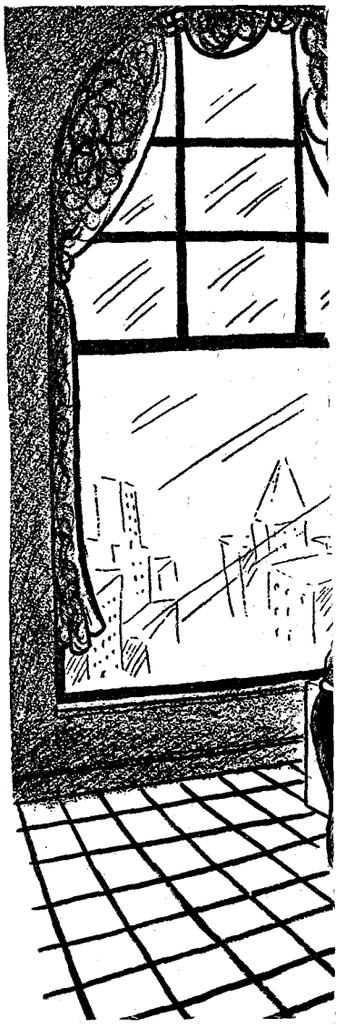
"Challenge to t

(from HUNGER AND REVOLT *by Jacob Bu*

"I am so glad you are a family man—I hate to pay $13.00 a week to just ANYONE."

"It says 'Unite Against Imperialist War and Fascism,' Sarge—should I run him in or do we agree with him?"



"Excuse me, sir—I've been w thirty-one years—" "By God!

The Purse Snatcher

A Century

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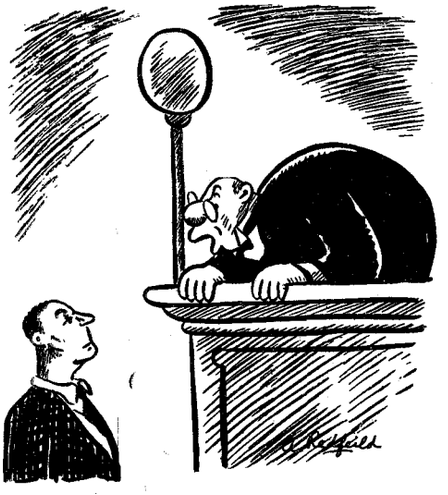
e Middle Class"

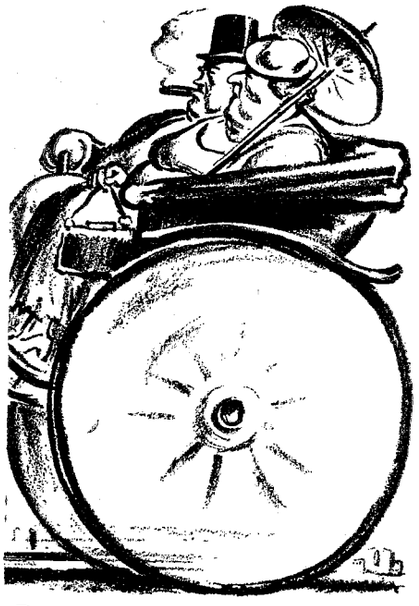
and THE RULING CLAWSS *by A. Redfield)*

ıg in the shipping department
KNEW you looked familiar!"

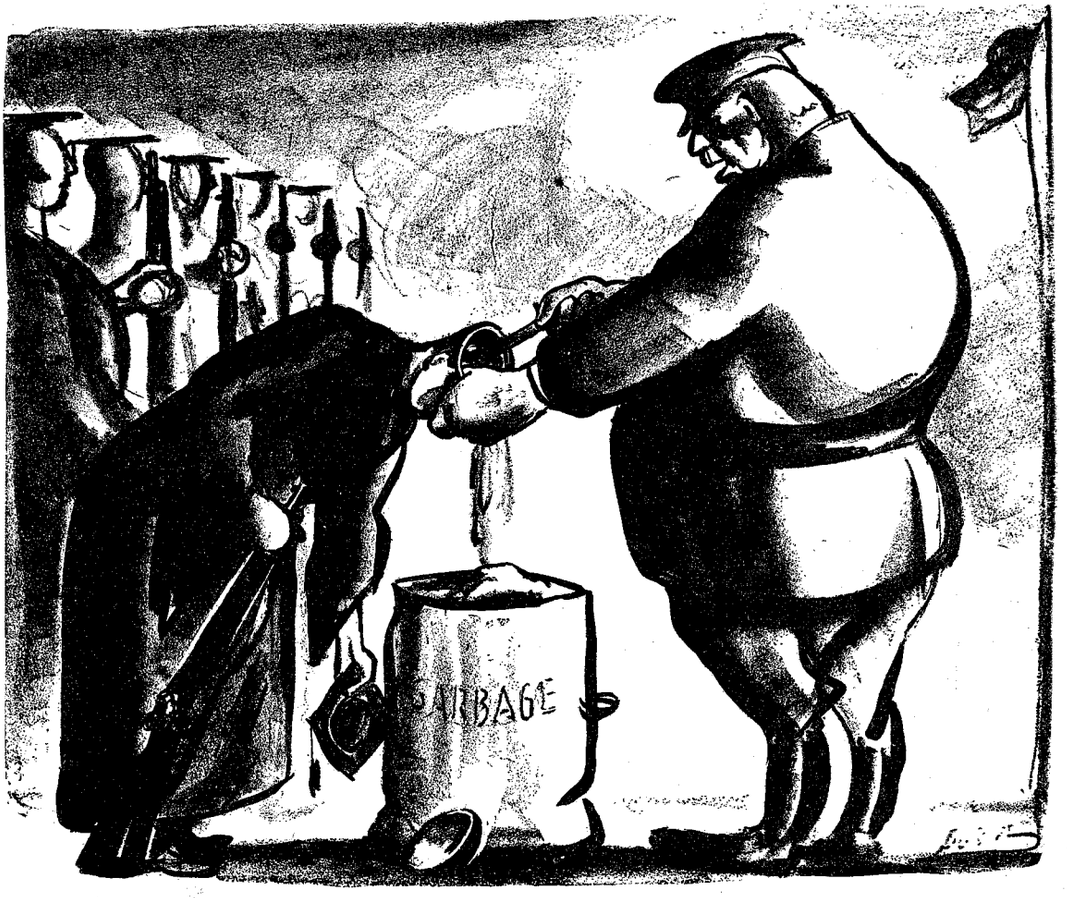


"Thirty days for picketing! I'll teach you to appreciate a free country!"

"Little Phyllis worked in a department store two days last week—isn't she heroic?"



Progress



" . . . What D'Ya Need Them Things For?"

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Artists and Trade Unions

FRANCIS J. GORMAN

TOO long have the professional man and woman considered themselves apart from the sordidness of this world's economic chaos! Too long have the artist, the doctor, the dentist, the engineer and the architect allowed themselves to be exploited in precisely the same manner which the unorganized worker is today exploited in industry, simply because the professionals have considered themselves "above" organization.[1]

This present crisis, however, and the rapid advance of the forces of reaction in the form of destruction of our democratic and economic rights, have begun to teach the professional workers, and the hitherto unclass-conscious white-collar workers that if they are to protect themselves, they must enter into the political and economic scene with a group organized of and by themselves. This group, however, if it is to serve as protection must act in conjunction with other groups, and thus present to the forces of reaction which seek to compel the people of the United States to accept the decadence and destruction of our present order, with a united people's group, ready to demand its rights and protect the few vestiges of democracy left us.

This, it seems to me, is particularly important for the artist and for the writer. These two professions are among those most ruthlessly attacked when they are not organized into economic and political groups for their own protection. It is in the miserable rewards for culture that we find some of the most blatant forms of exploitation. The rich throw crumbs from their tables to the living artists and writers in order to pacify their "cultural whims" while they put millions of dollars into the purchase of dead artists' pictures, because the premium has gone up with the centuries. It must not be thought that I deprecate the culture of the ages, nor that I feel that pictures of Old Masters are not worth handsome prices. It merely occurs to me that the living artist might well demand his share of the bounty, also. It occurs to me that the artists today have not taken advantage of the opportunities to organize and demand a living in return for their works which enrich civilization culturally.

My interest in the organization of professional men and women is not wholly an unselfish one. The professional[2] is more and more making inroads on the living standards of the workers, many of whom have protected their wages and working conditions for years by dint of hard effort to form trade unions. Furthermore, the unorganized sections of our exploited classes form the most fertile field for the advancement of reaction and fascism. And with fascism comes the end of trade unionism and all democratic rights.

We cannot under-estimate the danger of fascism. Nor can we under-estimate the unconscious part which unorganized professional workers play in helping the advent of fascism. It is historically a fact that the bulk of the mass support of Italian and German fascism lay amongst the professional and intellectual class together with the vast, dispossessed middle class. That is what any believer in democracy must prevent in those countries where the formal forces of democracy still exist.

It is time that the artist came down from his aloof position, and soiled his hands with helping his fellow-workers struggle for a living wage. His fellow-workers will then help him in the same struggle. For too long has the artist and the intellectual professed disinterestedness in political and economic matters. But artists and intellectuals are beginning to realize that as the economic crisis deepens, and the entire economic structure begins to wobble under the weight of decay, that they, too, must organize to protect themselves.

Though the first attack upon democracy comes with the destruction of the trade-union movement, it is followed quickly by the suppression of freedom of expression in cultural fields as well. How many German and Italian artists, writers, philosophers and intellectuals have had to flee from their native countries with the advent of the barbaric regimes of Mussolini and Hitler? How many people felt like weeping as the giant funeral pyre of the intellectual contributions of Germany's foremost artists and writers wrote the bloody story of Hitler across the midnight sky?

The same fate awaits us in the United States if we do not act now to prevent it. Events are moving swiftly in that direction. Our foremost middle-class champions and writers have discarded the outmoded liberal theory of "It can't happen here" in favor of the grim, realistic realization that it not only *can* happen here, but that it *is* happening here. One of the first steps to be taken in the prevention of this mass enslavement is the militant organization of professional workers and intellectuals. I cannot stress this point too much. It is a vital necessity if we are to win over decadence and the rebirth of the Dark Ages.

There is a second step to be taken also. It must come closely on the heels of the solidification of a strong economic organization of artists. It might even come simultaneously with economic organization. This second, or simultaneous step, is the organization of the artists, together with the entire mass of underprivileged and dispossessed, into a political front—into a militant, determined Labor Party.

We are beginning to discover in the trade-union movement that our trade unions, our economic organizations, are no longer sufficient protection for us. We cannot, indeed, even continue with our trade unions if we do not also band together in political unity. Big Business and the controlling financial and industrial interests are making organization harder and harder. They are turning more and more to the use of troops in times of strike; to the hiring of the industrial spy to break up trade unions; to the persecution, framing and murder of trade-union leaders. State legislatures are passing sedition bills. War becomes an ever-nearer menace. These things, this terrible march of events, have as vital a meaning to the artist as they have for the textile worker, the miner or the garment worker. For all of us are treated with the same ruthless cruelty in concentration camps; all of us, no matter whether we be textile workers or artists, feel the vigilante terror of storm troop activity.

My message, then, to the artists of the United States is two-fold. I would urge the immediate strengthening of an artist's union, all-inclusive, embracing every artist, whether he be the "successful" artist or the struggling, unrecognized artist. I would hope, also, that this artist's front would include also provisions for unity with all working-class organizations, organizations of unemployed and consumer and other professional groups in the common struggle for a decent standard of living and for other economic rights.

Next, I would urge that the artists not confine themselves to activity in the economic field alone. For this, we believe, is now inadequate in the face of the marching legions of fascism. Therefore, I would hope also that the artists will unite their organization with the thousands and thousands of other organizations now behind the movement for a Labor Party for the United States.

With the workers, the small business men, the bankrupt farmers, the professionals and intellectuals banded together first in strong, militant economic organizations, and finally coalesced into a powerful political vanguard, there is no way that the fascist bands can invade our ranks. We will present to the agents of reaction a solid, invincible front, and defy them to invade our ranks with the destruction of a dictatorship of dying capitalism!

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[1] From a statement of Francis J. Gorman, first vice-president, United Textile Workers of America, addressed to the Artists' Congress, New School for Social Research, 1936.

[2] Unemployed and unorganized.—EDITORS.

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The Ideal We Share

HERBERT AGAR

AT A TIME when a social order is collapsing, those who try to create a better society should keep in mind a simple picture of what, in human terms, they want that society to be. An ideal, capable of stirring the human heart, is quite as important as a sound economic theory. No revolution will take place without the ideal, or endure without the sound theory.

A tolerable society must provide at least two things: relative security (in the sense that a hard-working and competent man can expect to provide a decent life for himself and his family), and a way of life (or a set of social institutions) which tends to foster and support a sense of inner peace. The present order, based on monopoly capitalism, is dying precisely because it fails to live up to either of these requirements.

Monopoly capitalism not only does not provide security but does not desire it. A cardinal tenet of capitalist economic theory is that capital and labor must be "free," must be allowed to flow backwards and forwards from area to area and from industry to industry, depending on where the highest rate of profit is to be found.

"Free," of course, is an attractive word. What it means in terms of labor is that a workman had better be "free" from a home, because if he had a home he would not be sufficiently mobile. He had better be free from personal responsibilities; above all he had better be free from children. Landless and tool-less vagrant as the Indian, his successive livelihoods at the mercy of every new invention and of every obscure change in the current of international trade, this man has, of course, the vote. And the Thirteenth Amendment protects him from involuntary servitude. Yet his is not quite the sort of freedom for which our fathers founded America.

Similarly, the world of monopoly capitalism has failed to provide the plain man with inner peace. In worldly terms, inner peace is the state of mind of a man who feels at home in eternity. In no terms at all can the concept, inner peace, be applied to the world we see about us. One need only turn to our literature for confirmation of this point. For two generations it has become increasingly a cry of despair and disgust.

In spite of its failure to provide the prerequisites for a bearable life, monopoly capitalism in America has kept going for a long time on an inherited myth—the myth of the American dream. According to this myth, the plain man in America was to know security because real ownership of the means of production was to be so widely distributed that a large majority of families would share in such ownership. And those who did not share would have a reasonable hope of becoming real owners after a few more years of work. And according to this myth there were several reasons why the average man could hope to attain the state of inner peace.

First, he would live in a world organized to secure him justice, a world which put human rights above property rights, a world in which the widespread ownership of property made for economic (and hence social) democracy and at the same time conferred the real freedom which comes from being one's own master. Second, the institution of widespread property would make for stability of family life and without such stability it is doubtful whether man can feel at home in this confusing world. Third, the large majority of men would be doing work which was genuinely creative. Using their own means of production—whether land, or tools, or a shop where the distributive end of production is carried on—the joy of creation would be theirs and the joy of responsibility. Fourth, all the institutions of life would make for equality—not merely equality before the law, not merely a theoretic equality of opportunity, but a greater equality in the conditions of life than had previously been seen.

Such was the dream. If we ignore, for my present argument, the question of why the dream went sour; if we ignore all question of the economic means which are best adapted to making the dream come true; if we concentrate on the end in view, on the ideal, I think we can still salute that ideal. It is the life which I should still choose. And I doubt if there is anything in the picture which need be rejected by a Communist.

1. Security, in the sense that no man is deprived of the right to creative work.

2. Justice together with social democracy (and without social democracy justice is little more than a name).

3. The freedom of a man who is not constrained to be anybody's slave or toady.

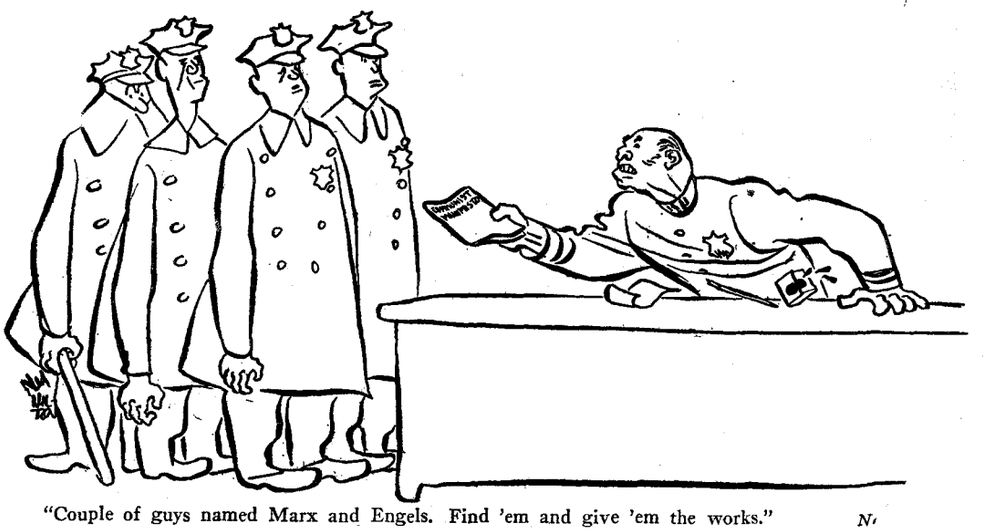
4. The reasonable permanence, both of residence and occupation, which makes a stable family life possible.

5. A widespread chance to do creative work and to enjoy responsibility.

6. The equality which goes with social democracy and which presupposes political democracy and an effective system of education for all.

I belong to those who think this dream can best be approached by retaining private property wherever possible—by socialization of those industries which are necessarily monopolistic, by the creation of small property units in land and by the use of consumers' cooperatives and of producers' cooperatives in those industries which do not need to be monopolies but which cannot be carried on in a small shop. At this point I and my friends divide sharply from the Communists. But I think it is important for both groups to raise the question whether we may not have a similar ideal, a similar end in view. I think this is important, not because I want to obscure the violent differences between us, but because I want to call attention to the fact that we have a common enemy. I refer, of course, to fascism.

Fascism seeks to prop up monopoly capitalism, to make it permanent, to endow it with a new poetic myth which may win the allegience of deluded men. But monopoly capitalism is plutocracy; it is a greedy tyranny; it is the common foe of all who care for freedom for equality, for a world in which the plain man may hope to feel at home, to feel a proper pride and to indulge the kindly virtues of life. Those of us who care for these things (no matter how we deplore each other's folly when it comes to the question of how to make these things possible) should have the courage, the understanding and the generosity to work together in the fight on fascism.



"Couple of guys named Marx and Engels. Find 'em and give 'em the works." *N*

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The Appeal to Reason

CORLISS LAMONT

IN THE March issue of Common Sense Bertrand Russell, the eminent English philosopher, states that "Radicals are unpopular people because unpopular people become radicals. Few things tend more to contentment than social success. A man who is liked at school and college, respected by business colleagues and loved by the ladies whom he admires, will, as a rule, think that all's right with the world, unless he suffers from ill health or economic disaster." And he goes on to say that while he himself believes that the rational arguments for radicalism are overwhelming, the fundamental incentives that lead persons, especially "educated men," towards the Left are non-rational and emotional.

Now Russell's view—which I think is based on a rather superficial application of psychoanalysis—is held by a considerable number of radicals. John Strachey, for example, in an article entitled "The Education of a Communist," writes that radical political views "must be the result of some idiosyncrasy which has made difficult an adjustment between the individual concerned and his social environment." And he recounts, quite appropriately, his first meeting with Bertrand Russell, who greeted him with the words: "What's the matter with you? I had a neglected childhood." Strachey proceeds, after some half-facetious remarks about his not making the Eton Cricket Eleven, to sum up his own psychological situation with the statement: "Many and deep, I am sure, are the personal neuroses which have made me into a communist."

It seems to me that Russell, Strachey and all others who use this particular approach are dealing in dangerous half-truths. Personal neuroses, social unpopularity and environmental maladjustment are important stimuli to thought and action. But such stimuli do not in themselves determine in what direction a man shall turn in order to solve his personal dilemmas. Even economic disaster does not necessarily push a man leftward, since he may really think that his economic self-interest lies in some other quarter. Unfortunately, too, he may believe that the interest of the whole class to which he belongs may lie in some superficial reform or in some reactionary program. People subject to the various kinds of pressure mentioned may, for example, join the Catholic Church, may become the storm-troops of fascism, may commit suicide, *or* may support socialism and the labor movement. What, then, is the deciding factor that brings them und to the last-mentioned alternative?

v firm belief is that, the deciding factor, 'ly in the case of middle-class professionals and intellectuals, is *reason*. Members of the middle class, conditioned throughout life against the socialist solution and steeped in all the prejudices of capitalist misrepresentation, will in the last analysis come over to socialism only if they become convinced intellectually that it is the most reasonable way out of our present impasse. They will take a further step and support the Communist method of revolution (wherever necessary) only if they become convinced that intelligence itself points to the use of force as the way to a society which will provide security and justice. Any number of different sorts of personal maladjustment may stir middle-class people into a searching consideration of their lot under a declining capitalism. But at some point, if they are to go Left rather than Right, a successful appeal must be made to their reason.

For example, in regard to the problem of unemployment it is possible to show, I believe, that the only feasible way of abolishing unemployment in our modern machine-civilization is to institute socialist economic planning. Members of the middle class naturally tend to oppose this conclusion with great stubbornness; yet the fact remains that more and more of them, either publicly or privately, are intellectually forced to acknowledge its correctness. Or take the matter of war. Twenty-two years after the outbreak of the World War mankind finds itself confronted with a more acute menace of international conflict than ever before. And an increasing number of the middle class are beginning to realize that the Marxist analysis is right, that war is inevitable unless the class-economic roots of war are destroyed through the establishment of genuinely socialist regimes. Surely one can accept this proposition without being impelled by some hidden Freudian complex; in fact, all that is required is a slight exercise of the brain.

Crockett Johnson

"If you haven't read *Escape from the Soviets* you don't know how lucky you and I are here in America."

The Russell-Strachey approach that I have described could properly be used, I think, only if it were very greatly broadened. Thus the term "maladjustment" would have to cover what these gentlemen seem to overlook, namely, the maladjustments of reason. I mean that middle-class intellectuals, viewing paradoxes such as that of starvation in the midst of plenty, are likely to experience a distinct mental shock. The whole situation seems so utterly stupid and contrary to rational principles. Hence there is a far-reaching maladjustment between what objectivity exists and what ordinary reason considers appropriate. This particular kind of maladjustment is perhaps best classified under the continual clash between ideals and actualities. Bertrand Russell's claim that a popular person is not likely to be a radical holds true only if that person possesses no sense of social responsibility. If he does, then his ideal of the good society may find itself in such terrible maladjustment with reality that he is stimulated towards radicalism.

I do not mean at all that emotional appeals to the middle class cannot be appropriately used. What I am saying is that a little psychoanalysis is a dangerous thing. If personal neuroses are sufficient to induce professionals and intellectuals to join the working-class movement, then the appeal to reason is of no great importance and the stirring up of passion becomes more basic than the telling of the truth. And it seems likely that the amateur psychoanalysis against which I am arguing has in many cases been responsible for a certain carelessness on the part of some radical publications in describing the facts.

Finally, I wish to call attention to Karl Marx's own words in *The Communist Manifesto*. There he writes: "Just as in former days part of the nobility went over to the bourgeoisie, so now part of the bourgeoisie goes over to the proletariat. Especially does this happen in the case of some of the bourgeois ideologists, who have achieved a theoretical understanding of the historical movement as a whole." Marx here definitely emphasizes the appeal to reason. True enough, he did not have Freud's very original and significant work to guide him. But if he had had, I greatly doubt whether he would have considered an Oedipus complex more important in bringing members of the middle class over to socialism than a certain modicum of good sound study and thinking.

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APRIL 7, 1936

The Menace to Culture

GRANVILLE HICKS

NO ONE sensitive enough to esteem the cultural heritage of the American people can be unaware that our culture would be destroyed by the rise of fascism. The picture that Sinclair Lewis gives in *It Can't Happen Here* is a faint copy of what has actually taken place in Germany and Italy. The burning of the books and the expulsion of the leading writers, artists and scientists of the Reich has dramatized for everyone the determination of the Nazis to suppress the finest achievements of bourgeois culture. Italy, over a longer period of time, has moved less spectacularly but just as surely to the same goal: two or three years ago a writer in a periodical not unfavorable to Mussolini admitted that Italian fascism had not produced a major work in any field of culture.

The fact that culture has languished not only in Germany and Italy, but also in semi-fascist countries such as Austria, Poland and Japan makes one realize that fascism is by its nature anti-cultural. Just as capitalism has developed the means of production to a point at which they are incompatible with capitalist control, so bourgeois culture at its best has dreamed of a society that goes beyond bourgeois limitations. Therefore capitalism, seeking to preserve itself by the destruction of its own progressive elements, has attempted to wipe out its cultural achievements. Acting through fascism, it has encouraged those who, warped by our civilization, hate culture and welcome its destruction. In America fascism would hand over culture to the Kluxers and wowsers, the George F. Babbitts and the Elmer Gantrys.

All this is sufficiently apparent. But what is not so clearly realized is that American culture is already menaced by a declining capitalism. Let me take a simple and concrete example. In theory and to a great extent in practice, our culture is democratic. It rests on the foundation of universal education. It is true that education under capitalism has always been more or less distorted, but the fact remains that, in America and western Europe, the ability to read and write has, during the rise of capitalism, become the possession of the vast majority, instead of a privileged few, and that more and more educational opportunities have been given to more and more people. But now the reverse process has begun. With larger numbers of boys and girls eager for advanced education, appropriations are reduced, teachers are underpaid, while many are unemployed and schools are crowded. Experiments, some of them important for the future of education, have been stopped for lack of funds. And at the same time there is an effort to reduce education to stark propaganda for the existing order, through the establishment of teachers' oaths, the conducting of heresy hunts and the dismissal of dissenters.

The same forces are at work in another institution, the free public library, capitalism's greatest contribution, next to the free public school, to education. Though libraries have tended to protect the existing order by their selection of books, and though their efforts to serve the masses in their communities have often been half-hearted, their importance to American culture must not be underestimated. For millions of manual and white-collar workers the public library has been the principal disseminator of culture. And today, in the average library, the amount spent on books is steadily being reduced, many of the services by which books were made available to the people are being eliminated and rigid censorship is being established.

Thus the democratic aspects of culture are being destroyed. Simultaneously the decline of capitalism menaces the producers of culture. It should be remembered that capitalism has never been more than lukewarm towards culture. While it emancipated millions of people from illiteracy, it tried to keep the minds of those millions enslaved. Thus, though it created a market and freed the artist from dependence on patrons, it placed a premium on the kind of art that served its own degrading purposes. As a result, artists have seldom been entirely at home under capitalism, and there is a long tradition of dissatisfaction and active dissent.

It is true, however, that in the past the artist could usually manage to live. Now, on the contrary, only the fortunate few can subsist by the practice of their craft. That is not because there are not people who want to buy books but because those people often have trouble buying bread. The plight of the graphic artist is perhaps even worse than that of the writer. Despite the pleasant figures that one sees about the large sales of particular books, or the high prices paid for particular paintings, the economic return for works of art has, on the average, become ridiculously small. The evidence is the vast number of writers and artists, most of them highly competent and many of them more than that, who have been forced to accept employment on the W.P.A. cultural projects.

Here is an issue on which the American middle class ought to be willing to take a stand. It is the culture of the middle class that is being threatened. Take the simple matter of the schools. The American middle class has always attached a great but by no means exaggerated importance to education. It has believed that every child should have the opportunity not only to learn to read and write, but also to receive the maximum of instruction that his desires and capacities called for. Today the fundamental tendency, only partly checked by emergency measures adopted by the federal government, is in the other direction. Capitalists as a group are determined to stultify education to protect their interests, and they are quite willing to sacrifice American youth rather than surrender their profits. If the middle class has any pride in its own achievements and any awareness of its own interests, it will demand that the schools be taken care of.

So on every front the middle class should come to the defense of its culture. It can, by organized and intelligent struggle, resist the capitalist attack. But in the long run it must fight for more than that. Capitalism, as it declines, will become more and more belligerent. Its role, already reactionary, will, if it turns to fascism, become barbarous. And even if its excesses are checked, capitalism cannot provide a basis for further cultural advance. The essentials for such an advance are already available. Our economic resources, if intelligently utilized, as capitalism cannot utilize them, could give the fullest educational opportunities to every child, could make literature and art available to every adult, could free every writer and artist from financial care. Under socialism, in other words, all the progressive cultural aims of the middle class could be realized.

I have dealt with certain obvious material factors in our cultural life. I have tried to show that the democratic aspects of our culture are threatened by reactionary capitalist policies in education, and that the effect of capitalist decline is already felt by our artists and writers. These tangible elements in the situation are all that I can hope to deal with in an article of this length. But I am not unaware of the subtler effects of capitalist breakdown.

It is no wonder that a great many bourgeois writers and painters, rejecting capitalism, are determined to build a socialist society in its place, and are contributing to a vital and growing revolutionary culture. It is the business of the artist to be sensitive to what is going on, and any true artist can tell the difference between life and death. The bourgeois writer or painter who casts in his lot with the revolutionary proletariat knows that he is not rejecting his cultural heritage but preserving it in the only way it can be preserved. With his heightened sensitivity, he feels now what great sections of the middle class will come to feel before long. He knows that American culture is being betrayed, and he enlists himself in the fight against its enemies.

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Architecture and the Architect

MEYER SCHAPIRO

THE architectural profession was almost completely ruined by the crisis. Residential building sank to one-tenth of normal. Unemployment was so widespread that the small percentage of architects and draftsmen at work in 1932 enjoyed only a seasonal and insecure occupation at a wage often less than half of their weekly incomes in 1929.

This slump was all the more catastrophic because of the extreme optimism of architects and their illusions of unlimited prosperity. For several years they had been employed on projects of magnificent scale, and had seen higher and higher buildings rising in the cities. Everywhere new building was evident; the prosperity of the middle and upper classes was realized in an immense quantity of private suburban homes. The sudden cessation of work was a shattering and unexpected blow.

Already before 1929, the profession was acquiring a new character. Formerly made up largely of independent architects working on a percentage or fee basis, in their own small offices, employing a few assistants or draftsmen, the profession changed its composition more and more in the decade preceding the crisis. The salaried architects and draftsmen became the preponderant elements. As many as three hundred men were employed in the larger architectural offices. Large corporations, especially chain-stores, which required constant building or remodelling, employed their own salaried architects. In the great architectural offices the employers rarely engaged in the work of design, but were essentially business men who obtained contracts, supervised the activity of the office and affixed their signatures to the designs. These designs were commodities, protected by lawsuit against unfavorable architectural criticism. The employed architects and draftsmen worked anonymously and collectively; and although trained as artists who regarded their work as an individual expression, very few of them could realize a project completely or carry out a design in all its detail. The intense division of labor imposed by the scale, uses and techniques of modern building involved a routine specialization. The architect was forced to submit to commercial requirements often pernicious to artistic quality. At the same time, with the growing scale of operation, manufactured units were increasingly standardized. Less and less planning and drawing were required in suburban projects, made up of rows of almost identical houses, and in high buildings with repeated storeys of fairly uniform design, lacking ornament and mouldings. For a given floor space in 1929 perhaps half as much drafting was necessary as in 1920. Even if building had continued after 1929 at the same rate as before, technological unemployment seemed to be imminent in architecture.

The rationalizing of design was developed further during the crisis despite, or even because of, the cessation of building. Economists looked to the revival of the building industries for the first impetus in overcoming the depression. But no market existed, and an intense effort was made to discover means of reducing the cost of building, of designing standardized houses which could be produced largely in the factory and set up quickly with little labor and planning. It was hoped that such houses, sold at $1,500 to $3,500, would reach a market hitherto untouched by housing promotion, and play a role in American economy like the automobile during the last boom period. The numerous designs that emerged at this time could find no financial backing; such projects threatened the values of existing mortgaged property and past investments; and besides, the market was illusory. Savings had been consumed during unemployment, and the uncertainties of the slight upswing were unfavorable to such speculation. But even unrealized, these projects indicated the reduced prospects of the architectural profession. The new standardized types of housing required few designers.

Architects became aware now, if only from the literature of the construction industries, that the future of their profession lay largely in housing. But private capital cannot by itself build such housing. Wages are too low to permit a rent sufficient for profitable large-scale building operations. A government subsidy is therefore absolutely necessary for private building enterprise. The state is thus drawn into the field of housing, and the future of the architect, his economic security, the character of his work, are intimately bound up with the government's policy. But even with such subsidy, private residential building must be decidedly limited, especially in the larger cities where land is so costly.

Architects, even of conservative tendency, recognize the present impasse of building. They observe a monstrous situation—immense technical resources for building, miserably housed masses, an army of skilled architects, technicians and building workers, unemployed or assigned to temporary relief projects.

Appeals from social workers, liberals and manufacturers for government support of private housing seemed to promise a renewal of building; but to date this promise has yielded very little. The government has poured out huge sums to salvage bad mortgages and has engaged in elaborate engineering projects, but the amount of subsidized or directly supported building of homes for the workers and lower middle class has been insignificant in proportion to the constantly proclaimed need and to the normal quantity of construction before 1929. At the same time the government has collaborated with private industry to reduce the wages of building workers and architects. The pay of skilled architects assigned to federal and local projects has been fixed at $23 to $30 a week—half, and in many cases, one-third of their wage before the depression. And even the present low standards have been won only through the militancy of the first national union of architects, the Federation of Architects, Engineers, Chemists and Technicians.

During the crisis, architects have lost their zest for esthetic problems. Architecture is an art only when people build; the alternatives of design must be real to excite enthusiasm and conflict.

Modern architects are stimulated by the wonderful variety of materials and the new technical resources of building. They are inspired by the thought that they are at the same time imaginative artists and scientific technicians, that they create communal environments as well as spectacles for the eye, and that their creations touch upon every aspect of human life. But these possibilities are hardly realized today; and the writings of architects, who appreciate the dignity of their art, have an inevitable utopian ring. The most progressive and gifted European architects have to their credit many plans, but few buildings; and those who were most active in Germany before 1933 are now in exile. Although large-scale planning is, for economic reasons, essential to architecture as a technique and as an art, such planning under capitalism cannot attain the freedom, the control over its means and ends, which existed for older architects in designing single buildings. There are few if any projects assigned to architects in which they can build according to the most advanced scientific and human standards. If they design housing on a large scale, they plan for low standards of living, tiny rooms and mediocre equipment; if they build skyscrapers, they build to advertise a property, and design structures which are forcedly vulgar, pretentious and unhealthy, and which add to the miseries of city life. The good modern buildings are few in number, rare, almost exotic structures, more often those in which no conscious reference has been made to artistic values or human needs, but have respected the highest requirements in the proper housing and operation of machines.

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In the human housing projects, all phantasy and expression are excluded beyond the incidental by-products of the commercially calculated results and those inexpensive feeble adjustments of minor surface details which announce an artistic ingredient. This poverty of form is sofetimes blessed as an admirable simplicity, suited to the age, and is compared with the qualities of a villa by Le Corbusier. But whereas this bareness of surface in a large private dwelling planned by Le Corbusier for a rentier esthetic is an elegant, highly-formalized and studied solution, enhanced by choice materials, ample spaces, fine furniture and pictures, and by the complexities of freely designed interior vistas, in the poorer homes, with its small rooms, low ceilings and plain walls, it is simply the expression of the celebrated "minimum standards" with which functionalist architects have been so preoccupied.

This situation is not inherent in the nature of architecture or modern technique. It follows rather from economic and social factors. The efficiency, continuity and progress of building depend today on two essential conditions—centralized large-scale planning, and a high and steadily rising living standard of the masses. State capitalism, fascist control, might realize, to a certain degree, the first condition; but only for a short period and at the expense of the living standards of the masses. It could design barracks and battleships, and monumental public buildings to serve the rulers' vanity, but it could not provide superior homes and cities for the entire masses. Only a socialist state could guarantee the latter.

When both conditions are present, the modern architect will really come into his own. A planned city cannot be designed mechanically or by mere repetition of a unit but requires the collective work of hundreds of architects; and the dwellings and schools of a classless society, with the highest standards available to everyone, become problems of art and technique calling for the imagination and unhampered intelligence which have presided in the best architecture of the past about these conditions. The change rests finally on the strength of the revolutionary working class.

In supporting the workers, to whom he is allied as a producer and as an exploited and insecure professional, the architect acts for his own interest and the interests of his craft function.

The Middle Class Today and Tomorrow:

The Old World of Capitalism

ANNA ROCHESTER

MORE than 3,000,000 men and women who formerly earned their living in middle-class occupations, and at least another half million of middle-class youth who have never been employed, are today in the ranks of the unemployed—some out of business, some unable to maintain independent professional work and all excluded from salaried jobs. These figures do not include those farmers who are part of the great middle class. Their problems also are related to the present stage of capitalism, but for the moment they are not under discussion.

The capitalist system had its earliest roots in small-scale production and petty trade. But long before the crisis this old middle class of petty capitalists was dwindling under the pressure of large-scale production and large corporations. At the same time, a new middle class was created from the minor executives employed by corporations, from the increasing numbers of professional workers, from the army of subordinate white-collar workers, and from the inactive owners of small investments.

This new middle class was also in an unstable position. During the great post-war boom mergers and mechanization of office work tended to cut down the relative size of salaried and clerical staff — relative, that is, to the increase in production and business activity. Then the crisis of 1929 sharpened all previous trends. It has made the situation of the American middle class one of the great mass problems of the world of capitalism.

But this undermining of their economic status is merely the sudden culmination of a long slow process. To understand it, we need to look separately at each broad section of the middle class, for, as Lewis Corey stated in his book on *The Crisis of the Middle Class,* "There is no identity of economic interest between independent enterprisers and salaried employes and professionals."

Obviously the tremendous growth of big industry has not entirely destroyed the old petty capitalist middle-class employers. By 1929 the largest 200 non-banking corporations had drawn into themselves nearly 40 percent of all non-banking business wealth. But still roughly 20 percent remained in the hands of unincorporated concerns—individuals and partnerships. A fringe of small manufacturers survived wherever operation was possible without large investment. They make up a considerable body in several food industries, in clothing, printing, and the large census item "lumber and timber products, miscellaenous." Small concerns function in bituminous coal mining, as building contractors and as small-town taxi owners, and real-estate and insurance agents. Most important as their last business stronghold is neighborhood trade. But after the World War the chain-store idea, which had first appears many years before, was taken up by finance capital, and the "heavy mortality in small stores" became a subject for special discussion.

Throughout the post-war boom small business failures were touching record figures. When "prosperity" was in full bloom, about one concern in eight was failing in the course of a year. Of course many found their way back into business again, but by 1929 the "proprietors and firm members" reported by the Census of Manufactures were roughly half as many as they had been in 1919. Their production had dropped to barely 8 percent of the total manufacturing output. In retail trade, chain stores with their undercutting prices and their large scale buying had captured more than 20 percent of total sales. Among the 1,375,509 "independents" about half were small stores with weekly sales averaging less than $200 and therefore giving the owner less than $20 a week in clear income for himself and his family.

Just how many petty capitalists were in business in 1929 the census reports and the income-tax returns neatly conceal behind their various tabulations. Estimates place the pre-crisis total of non-farming small business men and women (including non-salaried professionals) somewheer between three and three and a half million. (Nourse, Kuznets, Corey.) They were clearly outnumbered by the new middle class of salaried employes.

Then the crisis swept over them like a destructive storm. Some 68,000 manufacturing etsablishments (roughly one-third of the

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total) operating in 1929 were entirely closed in 1933. Business failures rose to a new record peak. Chain stores drew in 25 percent instead of 20 percent of the total sales. Thousands tried desperately to gain a fresh footing in small business and increased the number of restaurants, filling stations and coal and wood yards although sales in these lines as elsewhere were declining. More and more of the small traders—if they survived at all—slipped into the poorest group.

The three million professionals in the United States are a diverse group, including almost every possible relation to the economic system. Especially among the doctors, dentists, trained nurses, lawyers and architects independent practice has been the prevailing rule. But many of these men and women have been drawn into salaried work, and in other professions salaried work has become general; most professionals are now dependent on jobs. Artists and writers have commonly had to sell their skill in salaried jobs or commercial contracts while they tried to pursue genuine creative work on the side.

All alike have been hard hit by the crisis. For the general decline in middle-class income has cut into private professional work of all kinds. "Comfortable" families have cut down on doctors' bills and never employ a trained nurse. The halt in building and industrial production has thrown out many architects and technicians who had previously felt secure. Public school teachers have not only had "deductions," but in Chicago and a few other cities they were faced with payless paydays.

Even in 1930, the incomplete Census of Unemployment had reported that three out of every 100 professional workers were totally unemployed. Two years later the U.S. Office of Education estimated that some 200,000 teachers (more than one in six of all teachers) were unemployed. From these and scattering figures in other professions the Labor Research Association estimates that the total unemployment among all professions has risen above 750,000, or an average of one in four.

On salaried workers in certain industries (including many professionals) we have an estimate from the Department of Commerce on the crisis decline in employment. According to this, some 30 percent of all salaried workers employed in 1929 in mining, manufacturing, construction, steam railroads and water transportation were out of those industries in 1932. Those still employed were receiving on an average 16-percent less than they had received in 1929. And when we remember that these figures include the top corporation executives, most of whom were still sitting pretty (and even in some cases increasing their own salaries) we see what terrific insecurity the crisis brought to the salaried middle class. In fact the Census of Manufactures gives dependable figures which reveal the sharper decline among salaried employes other than top executives. Here 802,484 were employed in 1933, in comparison with 1,203,760 in 1929, a drop of more than 400,000 or one-third of the total in manufacturing.

But just as salaried workers include on the one hand professionals and various grades of executives, so they shade down to the most poorly-paid office workers. Typists, bookkeepers, file clerks and operators of various office machines have never enjoyed any greater security or higher pay than many factory workers, but they have been steadily encouraged to regard themselves as budding capitalists set apart from the working class. The crisis has been teaching them that their status is no better than that of the factory workers and truck drivers. In fact many salaried workers in all groups (except top executives and most highly-paid technicians) are beginning to understand their kinship with the proletariat.

The fourth section of the city middle class is made up of the uncounted persons (probably less than 2,000,000) living on small incomes derived from invested capital and taking no part in business or professional activity. Some of these tried to "play the market" during the boom, but the dice were loaded against small speculators and when the market collapsed thousands of them were left holding the bag.

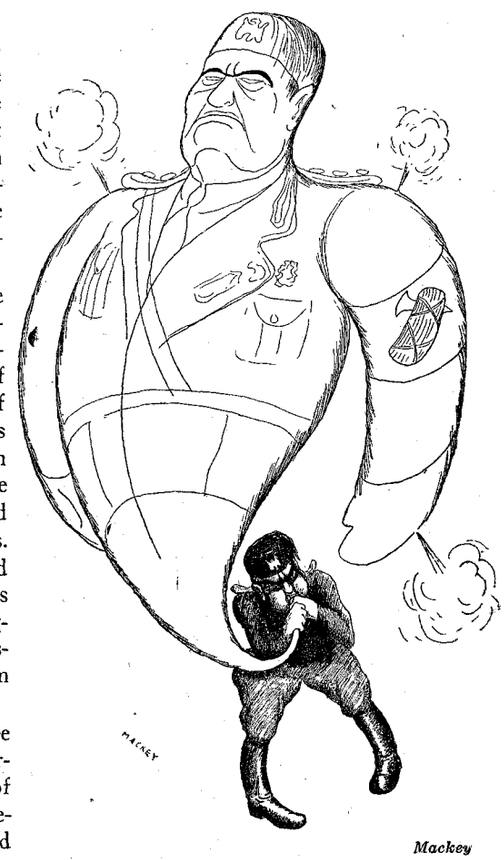
After 1929 the total income from rents and dividends was reduced, although some corporations—especially among the giant industrials—had sufficient reserves to continue payment of dividends to stockholders. Many bond issues have been defaulted. All these cuts in capitalist income have affected most sharply the small investors without inside pull in the financial world. Also the permanent decline in rates of interest, characteristic of the present period, has hit the small investor on the income side, while the drive for higher prices is pulling the cost of living up toward its pre-crisis level. In spite of the new wave of increasing dividends, many of the smaller members of the renter class have been pushed down to permanent poverty.

Sufferings of the middle class since the crisis have been less evident than the sufferings of the workers, except where individuals, unable to endure the collapse of their security, have swelled the number of suicides. On the whole, the middle class has had more resources to draw upon than workers have had and only when these are exhausted have the white-collar workers and small businessmen come on to the relief rolls. Also, of course, to a certain unmeasured extent, some individuals of the middle class have been able to find and hold working-class jobs, thus saving themselves from destitution while they increased the problem of working-class unemployment.

But it is broadly true that savings have been spent, home ownership has been forfeited and masses of individuals, stripped of property, have joined the destitute proletariat on the relief rolls. It may be assumed that members of the middle class have been largely responsible for the recent increase in total numbers on public relief. Taking urban and rural together, these have risen from less than 21 million persons a year ago to 24 million in February, 1936. A sample study of Urban Relief Population (in thirteen cities) as of August, 1935, found that "17 or 18 percent of the employable persons on (urban) relief belong to the white-collar group."

We do not need a statistical measure, however, to recognize the mass problem of destitution which capitalism and the capitalist crisis have created among the middle class. For many of them "recovery" can bring no restoration of their one-time security. The long-time trend of decline in small business is basic to the capitalist system. The new rise in corporation profits is most evident in large concerns. It has been achieved partly through speed-up and a relative reduction of staff, not only among the wage-earners but among office workers and minor executives as well. Such widespread corporate reorganizations as, for example, the recent mergers among U.S. Steel Corp. subsidiaries effect "economics" at the expense of salaried employes.

No broad revival with unlimited expansion of industry can be expected under capitalism, apart from actual war production. The financial rulers are shaping "recovery" with an eye to their own immediate profit. Workers and middle class alike face lowered standards of living, a downward trend in occupational status and the permanent problem of mass unemployment.



Mackey

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The Middle Class Today and Tomorrow:
Under Fascist Barbarism

HAROLD WARD

FASCISM, both in theory and as a political regime, is a beautiful example of the wolf in sheep's clothing. For the wolf substitute, in your mind's eye, the sleek, crafty, resourceful and utterly ruthless power of finance capital, trapped in the blind-alley of its own contradictions, its fangs bared in a permanent snarl, desperate as only a beast of prey can be desperate—to the death and without quarter. Then, for the deceptive sheep's skin substitute all the hollow "liberal" ideas, democratic illusions, fantastic hopes and eviscerated utopian yearnings of the petty-bourgeois masses. Those masses which think of liberty and equality as "natural rights" to be preserved rather than as hard realities to be won; which fondly believe in the myth of their independence as a "third estate," wedged between the predatory violence of the ruling bourgeoisie and the revolutionary thrust of the proletariat—and to whom in their proud credulity a wolf by any other name could be the Shepherd of the Twenty-third Psalm . . .

Any member of the middle classes in the United States who still toys with the dangerous idea that fascism is, ever was or ever can be, *his* way out of the capitalist crisis, would do well to keep that image in mind. To assist him in doing so—and by way of warning against *any* escape that does not frankly accept the clear-cut directives of the People's Front under working-class leadership (I say "leadership"—not "domination")—the following very brief summary of conditions in fascist Italy and Nazi Germany is presented.

The central fact in the rise and growth of fascism is the trend of the entire capitalist system in the direction of *private monopoly control:* both of social production in the fields of industry and agriculture and of the exchange mechanisms associated with banks and financial institutions. In Germany, at the time when Hitler assumed power, this control was already well advanced and required merely the support of an intensely reactionary and *militarist* state to express itself in its political form as "the open terrorist dictatorship of finance capital." Two banking trusts — the semi-state Commerz-Bank and the Dedi-Bank—rapidly emerged as the dominant financial institutions of the Third Reich, leaving behind them the wreckage of hundreds of smaller banks, including those municipal, savings and middle-class banks which "National Socialism" promised to coordinate in the public interest. Behind these banks, with their colossal reserves appropriated from the German people, was the General Economic Council established in September, 1933. Its members at that time included such powerful "robber barons" as Fritz Thyssen, Krupp von Bohlen, Karl von Siemens, Dr. Voegler and the bankers Baron von Schroeder, Otto Fischer and the present financial dictator, Hjalmar Horace Greeley Schacht.

As in Italy, the sole purpose in this reshuffling of the capitalist deck was to accelerate, under cover of middle-class demagogy, the process of wealth concentration. The first line of attack—labor and trade-union organizations—was facilitated by the class-collaboration tactics of the petty bourgeoisie which provided fascism with its chief mass support—and its next victim. Thus, in Germany, the powerful "Fighting League of the Trading Middle Class" (made up principally of the small shopkeepers and enterprisers whose anti-semitism was an hysterical outgrowth of their economic decline) was so effectively smashed by Hitler—the last time during the June purge of 1934—that its members must either swim with the proletarian opposition or sink in their own isolation. Another group — the craftsmen and artisans—has fared no better: in the one town of Breslau, for example, of 900 hairdressers in 1934, 560 were on relief, as were more than half of the shoemakers, some 500 of the innkeepers and scores of carpenters, tailors, pharmacists and other craftsmen.

If economic security, independent means (from *rentes* or dividends) and the ownership of productive capital in land or equipment are indicators of middle-class status, then the claims of fascism that it has increased this group are entirely wrong. As a proportion of all those gainfully employed in Germany and Italy the middle class has decreased in numbers by from 25 to 35 percent. In Italy the monthly average of bankruptcies has risen from 321 in 1922 (before Mussolini took power) to 1,100 in 1935; after stating that "the middle class of independent artisans and commercial people forms five percent of the population," Dr. Herman Finer, in his excellent study, *Mussolini's Italy,* points out that, "compared with 1914 the civil administration (officials, judges, teachers) have suffered a quite serious decrease of real wages, in some cases as much as 24 percent. The Army"—and this is a universal trait of fascism everywhere—"the Army is much better off."

In taxation, unemployment and relief, as regards wages, hours of work and general living conditions, the middle classes, both urban and rural, become under fascism indistinguishable from the proletariat. While in Germany the net profits of some dozen great combines rose by 350 percent in the first year of Nazi power and 1935 salaries of many big executives were raised by from 20,000 to 40,000 marks annually, the cost of living is *officially* admitted to have increased by 13 percent in three years, 1934 "savings" in the costs of social insurance amounted to over a billion marks as compared with 1933—and the total increase in unemployment from August, 1935 to February, 1936 is now admitted to be 50 percent greater than previous reports — in other words, 1,240,000, instead of a paltry 814,000. Wages have declined precipitously in all branches: today, according to a special dispatch to The Manchester Guardian,

> nearly 32 percent of the working population of Germany earn less than 25 marks a week, while of the remainder 35 percent earn between 25 and 50 marks a week.

That is, about half of those now "gainfully" employed under the swastika can enjoy their Nordic (or pay for their Semitic) culture at the rate of from $5 to $10 a week. This army of wage-helots includes virtually all of the middle-class office workers.

Conditions in Italy — which has already reached the stage of war that is the final "justification" of fascism—are rapidly heading for zero on all counts. In 1927, when Mussolini engineered his costly deflation of the lira, wages promptly declined by from 20 to 40 percent. Further decreases followed with monotonous regularity: in April, 1934, a sixth official reduction cut the salaries of all government employes by from 5 to 20 percent. Today wages and salaries in Italy are lower than they have been at any time in the past hundred years. Bankruptcies — a prime indicator of conditions among the trading petty bourgeoisie—have increased from a monthly average of 321 in 1922 (before Mussolini took power) to 1,100 in 1935. Parallel with this decline among the Italian masses and middle-class groups goes the usual monopolist trend in capital. For example: in the seven-year period, 1928-1934, large banking concerns (over 100 million lire each) increased their share of the national banking funds from 30 to 79.2 percent, while the share of the small concerns decreased from 70 to 21.8 percent.

In agriculture the situation is even worse. According to Paul H. Douglas, 50 percent of Italy's cultivatable land is concentrated in one-half of one percent of the total farm holdings, while of the approximately 8,000,000 agricultural workers, 3,000,000 are little better than casual laborers whose hourly earnings (when they can work) sel-

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dom exceed 10 cents. In 1933-34 almost half of the fascist tax revenues was contributed by the workers, including the clerical, professional and middle-class groups. In Germany taxation reduces an average wage already at or below the subsistence line by about 25 percent.

In neither country has the basic problem of housing even been attacked properly. The Nazis "promised" 1,200,000 new dwellings; actually fewer than 12,000 have been built to date and the number of *homeless families* has increased to a million and a half since 1927. As for Italy, we have it on the authority of Hugh Quigley, a prominent British architect who has made a thorough study of the "achievements" of Mussolini's Corporative State, that

> Fascism has to its credit no great housing schemes to relieve congestion and provide better homes. . . . Slum areas have been cleared to make room for grandiose conceptions such as the great boulevards running from the Capitol to the Colliseum in Rome . . . but no real provision has been made for rehousing the population displaced. In this respect fascist history is one of unrelieved indifference and brutality. . . .

To which one may add, grimly, "in *all* respects." Among the hundreds of bitter jokes on the Nazi regime one—reported by Josephine Herbst—tells the whole story:

> Hitler goes to a barber shop and asks the barber what can be done to make his flat hair stand up a little. The barber (himself a representative of the middle-class artisan group) replies, "Stick your head out the window and look at what is going on in Germany: your hair will stand on end for the rest of your life."

THE fate of the middle classes under fascism is most vividly illustrated by what happens to education and cultural activities in general. Hitler's own paper, The Voelkischer Beobachter, had some very frank things to say about this just a year ago:

> The economic misery of the young undergraduates has reached the limit of endurance. Through this misery the academic youth of Germany is confronted with a moral and intellectual distress that is tantamount to despair and proletarianization.

Thus, in direct contradiction to its repudiation of "Marxism," with its emphasis on classes, German fascism openly admits the "proletarianization" of its own middle-class youth. In the summer of 1933, before the Hitler regime had got into its full stride, university enrollments stood at 130,000; in the spring of 1934, out of about 40,000 eligible for entrance, 15,000 were to be admitted: of this number 8,000 men and 1,000 women had first to pass through the labor camps. Less than half of these 9,000 were finally matriculated. Furthermore, in 1934, 22,000 children of "unreliable" (i.e., suspected of anti-Nazism or "Semitic" origin) parents were forced into "land-year" service on the big estates; by 1935 this total had increased to 40,000. We know that in 1933 the Nazi authorities set up so-called "student unions," which openly led attacks on "unpopular" (radical) teachers and on all opposition to the prevailing "Aryan" philosophy. As for the teachers themselves, we learn from a recent article on "Education under the Nazis" by that staunch liberal, Prof. Charles A. Beard, that

> all protective safeguards against administrative removals, transfers, and demotions have been broken down, and the teaching profession stands defenseless before the administrative machine. In addition [American professional organizations take notice!] teachers' organizations, which formerly sought to advance the interests of the profession, have gone the way of the trade unions and have been incorporated in the Nazi system.

Italian fascism has shown its respect for education by reducing the number of university registrations from 82,000 in 1927 to a bare 32,000 in 1932. Premier Mussolini, speaking on the subject in 1930, expressed himself with characteristic bluster:

> Discipline, yes: iron, military discipline; but of soldiers, that is, of men who have a conscience, a will, a character, and who therefore do not renounce themselves in a devotion in which—nothing is given!

(Compare with the Nazi Guenthler: "a healthy body will be better able to cope with the tasks lying before us than a trained and well-filled head.")

Failing the arguments of propaganda, coercion and intimidation there remains the final weapon—open terror. Since the Nazis assumed power in Germany, over 4,000 anti-fascists of all ranks have been killed, 317,000 have been arrested and over 200,000 wounded and tortured. And in Italy, according to figures recently published by Carlo Rossi:

> during 1927-32 there were 3,500 persons tried by the Special Tribunal, and about 2,000 of them were sentenced to nearly 12,000 years' imprisonment . . . twenty-eight trials took place in 1934, the prison sentences totalling 1,735 years. During the first five months of 1935 already twenty-four trials have taken place against 225 accused, the prison sentences totalling 1,224 years. Since the so-called amnesty of September, 1934, the Special Tribunal has convicted 400 people. Particularly notable are the verdicts given in May, 1935, involving a prison total of 564 years against seventy accused from Trieste and Istria. . . .

It should be clear, even from this summary review, that fascism, in the classic phrase of R. Palme Dutt, is "the organization of social decay." Middle-class groups are involved in this decay with the workers who necessarily bear the first shock of all political reaction. Will they understand that no escape from the wolf of fascism is possible until—and unless—they frankly ally themselves with the workers—who, also of necessity, are in the first line of defense against it?

A Middle-Aged Middle-Class Woman...

GENEVIEVE TAGGARD

In the middle of winter, middle of night
A woman took veronol in vain. How hard it is to sleep
If you once think of the cold, continent-wide,
Iron-bitter. Ten below. Here in bed I stiffen.
It was a mink-coat Christmas, said the papers . . .
Heated taxis and orchids. Stealthy cold, old terror
Of the poor, and especially the children.
Now try to sleep.

In Vermont near the marble-quarries. . . . I must not think
Again, wide awake again. O medicine
Give blank against that fact, the strike, the cold.
How cold Vermont can be. It's nerves, I know,
But I keep thinking how a rat will gnaw
In an old house. Hunger that has no haste. . .
Porcupines eat salt out of wood in winter. Starve
So our children now. Brush back the hair from forehead,
See the set faces hungrier than rodents. In the Ford towns
They shrivel. Their fathers accept tear-gas and black-jacks.
When they sleep, whimper. Bad sleep for us all.
Their mouths work, supposing food. Fine boys and girls.
Hunger, busy with this cold to make barbarian
These states, to haunt the houses of farmers, destroyers
Of crops by plan. And the city poor in cold-water flats
Fingering the gas-cocks—*can't even die easy*
If they turn the gas off. I'm sick, I tell you. Veronol
Costs money, too. Costs more than I can pay.
And night's long night-mare costs me, costs me much.
I'll not endure this stink of poverty. Sheriffs, cops,
Boss of the town, union enemy, crooks and cousins,
I hope the people win.

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The Middle Class Today and Tomorrow:

The New World of Socialism

JOSEPH FREEMAN

WHAT will happen to the middle class under socialism? Today, this question need not be considered from the purely theoretical viewpoint. We already have the living example of the Soviet Union. We know now from experience that socialism actually does replace production for profit with production for the benefit of society. Economic activity in this new world is determined not by the profits of the capitalist, but by the needs of society. This results in the complete liberation of all the forces of production, of all the creative and constructive impulses of man.

The objective of socialism is the abolition of all classes and all class differences. For the purpose of establishing socialism, the big bourgeoisie is the first class to be eliminated. The middle class and its individual members are absorbed into the unity of collective labor which is the basis of socialist life. As the new system advances upon the rising level of technique and production, the workers and farmers also disappear as *classes,* and we have the classless society of socialist citizens, each working in his own field toward the common goal.

Socialism nationalizes the means of production and distribution, destroys the old capitalist state and replaces it with the state of the workers and farmers. In exceptional cases, members of the big bourgeoisie may accept and adapt themselves to the new social order. Thus, Vice-Commissar of War Kamenev was a general in the czarist army; and various Soviet enterprises contain managers who were formerly factory owners. But the exploiting bankers and manufacturers must disappear as a class along with the capitalist system which produced them.

The industrial workers, who are the dominant force in socialist economy and the socialist state, transform themselves while transforming society. In liberating themselves from capitalism, they liberate all other useful social groups, for they have no one under them to exploit. As general knowledge and technical skill become universal, and as all classes disappear, they, too, become socialist citizens instead of a separate class.

In the village, socialism destroys the capitalist foundation of classes through the industrialization and collectivization of agriculture. Under socialism, the gulf which separates the city from the country disappears; the farmer is no longer a farmer in the old sense. In the Soviet Union, the peasant, once a beast of burden, has climbed through industrialization and collectivization to higher living standards and to a higher culture. With our advanced technique, the American sharecropper would make even more rapid progress under socialism. The vague term "middle class" includes not an independent class, like the proletariat or the bourgeoisie, but those middle strata of the population of whom the non-exploiting farmers constitute a large part. For these farmers the dramatic rise of the Soviet peasant is an extraordinary object lesson in the ways of socialism.

In this planned and unified social system the members of the middle class not only find their place, but they also find a life of security and growth impossible for them under capitalism. The old middle class of small independent business men disappears as a social grouping and its individuals become absorbed in the collective economy of socialism; the functional groups of the middle class become part of the new community of labor.

In the Soviet Union, for example, former owner-managers of small enterprises have become employes either of the state or of the cooperatives. As employes, they are guaranteed and actually enjoy the fundamental rights to work and to receive a secure income; they are free of the dependent relations of capitalist industry; they have the security of an all-inclusive social-insurance system; they have increased leisure and the increase of personal freedom which leisure makes possible; they have constantly increasing living standards and the fullest access to art and culture.

These enormous gains are most evident in the case of the functional groups of the middle class, primarily of the technological professions, such as engineers, chemists, architects, physicists and economists; and of the service professions, such as doctors, dentists, writers, artists, newspapermen, actors and teachers.

Under socialism, engineers, architects, scientists and technologists of various kinds hold an especially important place. Socialism can develop only on the basis of increased productivity, and the abolition of private profit abolishes all artificial limits to demand. As a result, effort is concentrated on the development of science and technique. Every facility is placed at the disposal of the technological professions for growth and creative labor.

Every honest observer has been amazed at the expansion and progress of science and technology in the Soviet Union. But this is nothing to be amazed at. These advances are inherent in socialism. The moment you relieve production from its capitalist burdens, the moment you coordinate and plan and push economy to higher and higher levels, that moment the scientist and technologist becomes an honored and indispensable man. Under capitalism today, the professional is the victim of salary cuts and unemployment; he is thrown into the street because he can no longer bring the capitalist profit. Big Business, caught in a crisis of its own making, retards science, suppresses inventions, withholds means for research. The vast possibilities of modern science are frustrated by a system which can no longer make progress. In the Soviet Union there has been a striking increase in the number of scientists and scientific institutions, in discovery and invention, in the collaboration between the workers at the factory bench and the scientist in the laboratory.

Moreover, under socialism economy becomes more and more a matter of organization, management and supervision. And these functions are divested of the characteristics which mark them under the exploitation of capitalism. The work of the economist, the accountant, the manager, the chemist, the physicist, the architect, the engineer, is encouraged as a form of productive social labor. That is why there has been so great an increase in the number of these professionals in the U.S.S.R.

This is equally true of the service professions. In the Soviet Union the doctor and the dentist have security and prestige and opportunity for free development because medicine is socialized. Under capitalism there are a few rich doctors who multiply the visits of their patients and encourage operations because these mean profit. There are patent-medicine rackets so rich that no one succeeds in stopping them. There are a mass of doctors who are poor because the workers do not get sufficient wages to take care of their health, and millions who need medical attention but have no money for it. In the socialist society of the Soviet Union the doctor is paid by the state to keep his patients well. His income is the same whether he performs ten operations or none. This places the emphasis upon socialized preventive medicine—equally good for the patient, the doctor, and society as a whole.

The remarkable growth of education and of the arts in the Soviet Union is also inherent in the socialist system. The bourgeois ideal of property as the chief expression of the personality is replaced by the socialist idea of creative cultural labor. Knowledge, art and culture in general be-

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come not the property of a privileged caste, but an integral part of the whole of life and of all the people. Hence the increase in the number of schools, newspapers, theaters, cultural clubs which is so striking a feature of Soviet life. Socialism moves toward universal knowledge, toward the enlightenment of the whole community. This means not only security for the educator, the artist, the actor, the newspaperman; it also means something equally important for the so-called service professions—the opportunity for the fullest self-expression and the highest development of their creative functions.

Under socialism, the problem of the useful, functional groups in the middle class is relatively simple. Somewhat more complicated is the position of the small businessman. Representing an outmoded form of production and distribution, he must make a special effort to adapt himself to the new social order. But once he realizes that his interests are with socialism rather than capitalism, his place in the new order offers him many advantages over his old status. At present he is crushed by monopoly capital; he pays high taxes, is squeezed to the wall by the trusts and the chain stores; his business is ruined by the reduction in the income and the living standards of his customers, the workers, farmers and professionals. His typical lot in the crisis is bankruptcy or unendurable debt.

The small businessmen may be divided roughly into two categories. They are either small independent producers with sweatshops that have no machines; or distributors like the small storekeeper. The small producers who own and manage their small enterprises, work themselves and sometimes employ a few workers. In the Soviet Union such people joined producers' cooperatives. Instead of having ten small individual producers on ten adjacent blocks, these men got together and established one cooperative shop in which all ten worked. They received machinery and raw materials from the socialist state on a preferential basis. They got concessions in taxes. In this way, they developed a more efficient and more productive organization than the ten little shops which they formerly had. Above all, they had economic security and the opportunity to advance their economic lot because they were relieved of the burden of competition. In this way the small producer eventually entered the cooperative system, or became an employe often in the highly paid managerial personnel of a state large-scale factory.

The producers' cooperatives do not divide their income equally. Under socialism, such incomes, like the wages of the industrial workers, depend on the individual's output. But there is every incentive and every opportunity for the individual to improve his abilities, to increase his output. Prices are regulated by the socialist state, and there are no profits in the capitalist sense. As Soviet citizens, the members of the cooperatives are entitled to all the social benefits of the socialist system; but they also have their own social insurance, their own hospitals, club rooms, reading rooms, cultural organizations. Moreover, there is an All-Union Organization of Producers' Cooperatives. In this way members of the former middle class have advantages they never enjoyed under capitalism. Instead of being an isolated, helpless little businessman, with no real voice in the national economy or the affairs of state, the former small producer is now a member of a powerful organization with tremendous economic, social and political influence. His interests are represented in the general interests of the socialist society of which he is a citizen.

The second group of small businessmen, the distributors — owners of grocery and clothing stores, for example—enter the consumers' cooperatives. Socialism abolishes all private trade. The chain stores, like the A. & P., would be taken over by society on a national scale; the small stores would be organized into consumers' cooperatives.

Under capitalism, the small store owner exploits his employes and has sharp conflicts with them; the need for profit compels him to take advantage of the consumer, too. He competes fiercely with his rivals and either gobbles them up or they gobble him up. He is insecure; he may be wiped out by the "business cycle," or taken over by the chain stores or closed by the banks that hold his mortgage. He loses money because of changing fashions artificially introduced by the big manufacturers. Health, accident and death in the family are solely his private concern; he pays for them when he can, or goes without them when the "business cycle" drives him into poverty and bankruptcy. In short, he is a lamb among the wolves of capitalism.

Under socialism, the same man enters a consumers' cooperative. He is freed of the insane struggle for profit. He neither exploits nor is exploited; he has neither fierce competitors nor trusts to devour him. Capitalism has been abolished and planned economy introduced, hence no crises to ruin him. There are no artificially induced changes in style for private profit, hence no loss on stocks. He has the benefits of social insurance, socialized medicine, art and culture, both from the state and from his own consumers' cooperative. In short, he is a creative, secure citizen in a socialist society.

Apart from these economic advantages, the sections of the middle class have much to gain socially and politically from socialism. The dictatorship of the proletariat ceases to be a bugaboo when its real nature is grasped. The capitalists established a dictatorship in order to destroy outmoded feudal relations and to establish a new social order. Today they maintain their power and profits by a dictatorship which represses the workers, farmers and lower middle classes. The proletariat establishes a dictatorship in order to destroy capitalism and inaugurate socialism.

It is a dictatorship of ninety-nine percent of the people over the one percent which exploited them. But socialism itself stimulates the forces which eventually make the dictatorship superfluous. Already the Second Five Year Plan, which terminates in 1937, has set the goal of abolishing those factors which create classes and class differences. This means that the workers, farmers and functional groups of the former middle class are to be merged into a higher and freer unity of socialist creative labor. In this way, the dictatorship is steadily modified until in time it disappears altogether. According to Sidney and Beatrice Webb, democracy is more widespread and more actual in the U.S.S.R. than anywhere else in the world. In the long run, the socialist state will be replaced by the self-governing community of labor, and there will be communism.

The Soviet Union is the first stage in the world-wide socialist society; and socialism is the first stage toward communism. Under socialism there are no classes and no class differences; but there still exist differences between mental and manual labor and differences in income based on ability and output; and the state exists. Under communism there will be no distinction between mental and manual labor; income will be based on the rule: from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs; and the state, in the phrase of Engels, will "wither away."

The Soviet Union has been cited as an example because it is the first socialist state in the world. The United States, despite its technical advances, will naturally learn from Soviet experience, whose main outlines are generally applicable. But a socialist America would start with certain advantages. It took the Soviet Union years of heroic effort to achieve the industrial and technical base indispensible for socialism. That base already exists in the United States. We also have an adequate supply of skilled labor and trained professionals to operate the existing industries, laboratories, and institutions at their maximum capacity. Moreover, America's workers, farmers and professionals are learning from the Soviet Union's experience. They have seen that socialism "works." Consequently, our professional and intellectual workers, as distinguished from the old Russian intelligentsia, can enter the socialist system at once and with greater understanding. Finally, a large part of our middle class has been proletarianized by the crisis. It understands more and more that its way out is not fascism, but socialism. If the professionals and technologists and teachers and writers cooperate with the workers and the farmers in establishing the new order, we have every facility for a rapid advance toward a socialist America where civilization can reach heights hitherto undreamed of in this country.

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REVIEW AND COMMENT

Books the Middle Class Reads

THE reading public as a whole, assuming that the literate population above the age of ten all reads something, totals 90 millions. Discounting overlappings, 40 million of them buy newspapers, 30 million buy magazines, 26 million read books drawn from the public libraries, between two or three millions rent their books and from two to five hundred thousand buy them.

Such studies as the Lynds' *Middletown* would indicate that the majority of public-library users are workers and their children. Observation would indicate that rental libraries are patronized chiefly by the women of the middle and lower sections of the middle classes—the housewives in the residential sections, and the various grades of clerks in the business districts. As a group the middle-class reads fewer books than its educational advantages and its supposed influence in American life would call for, and this applies generally to its apathetic participation in the cultural life of the country.

I think it might safely be said that where there is book ownership there is book influence. In the Soviet Union, for example, books hold a high place and there, in spite of the immense expansion of public-library facilities, there has been a simultaneous expansion of personal book-ownership. In the United States there has been a simultaneous shrinkage of both. Here the movies and the radio are usually held responsible for the limited circulation of books, but the movies and the radio flourish equally in the Soviet Union. The causes lie deeper.

More important as factors are the prevailing insecurity of life, the prevalent cynicism, which keeps reading a diversion rather than an activity, the drastic drop in average income, which automatically takes book purchasing out of the range of most people and the demoralization of family life. In a stable and comfortable home a library is a desirable fixture, but for the relative nomads that Americans have become it is a burden. Books are high-priced because of the small market for them; and the high price reciprocally limits the market. Since the depression the never-large total of book publishers has decreased by about a fifth, while discharges of workers by the survivors have further reduced the personnel of the industry.

The influence of books, however, remains substantial. While the reading circles, lyceums and literary societies that were once a feature of American social life have declined, books have preserved their prestige. It remains the form in which substantial literary reputations are made, partly because of their relative permanence as contrasted with periodical literature, still more because the apparatus of book reviewing, which even the Hearst press considered a desirable circulation feature, adds to their influence. A best seller that has found 100,000 purchasers probably reaches through private borrowing and the two kinds of library circulation, a million readers and may be read about by several millions more in book review columns and articles. The reputations thus made are bought by the big magazines and Hollywood and in that way come to exert some influence. Hollywood's treatment of *It Can't Happen Here* indicates how little range that influence is given, when it threatens to have any political effect. Commercialized literature, in turn, has far more effect upon the writer, no matter how celebrated, than the celebrated writer has upon it. Most of the hired, high-class writers are speedily leveled down to the Hollywood and Lorimer standard and made innocuous.

The book business is a peculiarly ambiguous one. Its position in the reading trades is analogous in some respects to that of the subsidized opera company and symphony orchestra in the music field. But, with the exception of the University publishers, it operates without a subsidy and exists frankly on the profit incentive. If there were no market for books of some literary pretension they would not be published, and our book publishers would have little compunction about putting between book covers the same stuff dealt in by Hearst, Macfadden and Lorimer. Where it turns out to be profitable, as in the fiction provided for the circulating libraries, it is done cheerfully enough. Book publishers are checked by the persistent taste for good writing and for better than standardized thinking, and by the existence of a corps of about a thousand book reviewers, many of them writers themselves, who exercise a professional standard of judgment high enough, at any rate, to help keep publishing somewhere within reach of literature. For that reason publishers' lists are spotty. It is possible for the same publisher, in the same year, to bring out an unquestioned masterpiece like Doughty's *Travels in Arabia Deserta,* and Warner Fabian's *Flaming Youth.* To the book-publisher's great annoyance, his readers' taste cannot be standardized in the editorial offices as it is in the periodical press. Books are therefore a more responsive and accurate register of current taste and opinion than the periodical press where, it might be said, the organs of thought and choice have been carefully defunctionalized. A study of best sellers over a period of years would therefore be of value.

Such a list was prepared and interpreted in a recent article in The Saturday Review of Literature, by Frederick Lewis Allen, author of *Only Yesterday.* Mr. Allen noted that the prosperity and self-satisfaction of America at the turn of the century was reflected in the smug security of its best-selling fiction.

About 1905 a questioning note appeared. Among the best sellers were Edith Wharton's *The House of Mirth* which indicted the shallowness of upper-class life, and Winston Churchill's *Coniston,* an unflattering picture of New England politics. Until 1917, through what Mr. Allen nicely describes as "the sugary years," when literary sweets were consumed in great quantity, some books dealing realistically with American life managed to come to the top. By 1919 the sale of non-fiction had grown to such a point that its best sellers were also listed. Taste in books generally had by that time broadened out to a point where it seemed to indicate that the American reading public had arrived at what might be called its age of maturity.

That is Mr. Allen's opinion. He notes the tendency toward escape-seeking; he notes the decline in religious authority and freer sexual attitudes. The optimistic conclusions he draws from what he seems to regard as a liberation of the spirit of inquiry, a broadening of interests, and a rise in the level of taste seem to me unwarranted. In my own interpretation I will not limit myself to the top best sellers, but to all books which exerted influence. In this respect the books of Sherwood Anderson though they did not reach the top rungs, and books like Spengler's *The Decline of the West,* were more important than the pacemakers.

The interest in escape books was even more noticeable in non-fiction than in fiction. Travel books like *White Shadows of the South Seas* and still more, Keyserling's *The Travel Diary of a Philosopher* which wafted the reader away in spiritual as well as geographical distance, showed that people felt insecure in America and that from any concept of a good life it had become uninhabitable. The fact that this taste appeared coincidentally with the emigration of intellectuals, some of whom, including Santayana, Eliot, Pound, H.D., and Laura Riding have never returned, is significant.

The interest in international affairs and in general political and economic problems had a special character. The world war had ended the myth of American isolation; Americans felt dragged into the stream of history and wanted to know where this current was taking them. The questioning that

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was everywhere going on was shown in the large sale of Wells' *The Outline of History,* Van Loon's *The Story of Mankind,* and other outlines and symposia on all phases of human experience. In a healthy society such a curiosity would be a wholesome sign. But here the spur to questioning was anxiety, doubt and disillusion. There was in all this scramble for information a hunt for salvation. In Wells' books and in books like Robinson's *The Mind in the Making* a sense of impending disaster and a feeling of despair make themselves felt. This was climaxed by that brilliant and morbid book, an intellectual ushering in of fascism, Spengler's *The Decline of the West.*

Everywhere there was a dissolution of social tissue. Cynicism in politics went along with sexual looseness and such a conduct of business as indicated that the financial masters had lost their sense of reality as well as their sense of responsibility. There was something unhealthy even in the better literary taste shown at the time; it was connoisseurship rather than participation.

With the stock market crash in 1929 and the beginning of the depression there was a dislocation of audience. The number of book buyers was reduced at once by the cutting off of income. Among the best sellers there was a new crop of escape books and such items of pep talk as Vash Young's *A Fortune To Share* and Pitkin's *Life Begins At Forty.* But there were also Strachey's *The Coming Struggle For Power* and a great interest in Marxist literature. The books did not figure in the best seller columns, but workers' bookshops throughout the country began to do big business. There were three new editions of Marx's *Capital,* two of them in the popular-priced series, The Modern Library and Everyman's Library. In the public libraries where the middle class, expropriated by the decline of capitalism, goes for its reading, more than ever before, there was a distinct rise in books dealing with serious subjects. A good deal of this reading is what would be called radical. There is evidence that sections of the middle class audience has changed from the demoralized reading of the late twenties to a purposeful type of reading, seeking not escape but solutions.

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Middle-Class Attitudes

INSURGENT AMERICA, by Alfred M. Bingham. Harper & Bros. $2.50.
LAND OF THE FREE, by Herbert Agar. Houghton, Mifflin. $3.50.
THE COMING AMERICAN FASCISM, by Lawrence Dennis. Harper & Bros. $3.

THE books under review are symptomatic of the alarm with which American middle-class people view the deterioration of their economic position and the bankruptcy of their traditional concepts and modes of action. Despite their diversity of attitude and opinion, the authors—among the most articulate members of their social groupings—agree on the central fact of our age: the decay of the present social order and the struggle for a new society. But they part company in their conclusions as to what must be done about the decline of capitalism and the crisis of bourgeois democracy. To their reactions should be added the naive plea of Sinclair Lewis in *It Can't Happen Here,* that we return to the happy days of the twenties.

The authors all share the notion that only the middle class can lead and direct the movement which will introduce the necessary social changes. As a corollary of this stand, all of them in one way or the other, deny the existence of the class struggle and insist that only a "classless" approach will yield significant results. This bias, a reflection of their class position, enters into every phase of their thinking. Inevitably this attitude leads them to seek "the road back," to the never-never land of petty-bourgeois utopia. In the case of Lawrence Dennis the utopian portrayal of fascism is deliberate.

Marx once said of this type of middle-class intellectual that he is "nothing but social contradiction in action." He hates and envies the big bourgeoisie, but at the same time he feels sorry for the downtrodden. This double pull is in evidence in sincere persons like Lewis, Agar and Bingham. They are worried over the sinister rise of political reaction in the United States. Yet they cannot shake themselves loose from snobbish feelings towards the working class. Hence they make progressive moves, announce their enmity to fascism, but fail to carry their preliminary actions through to the inevitable conclusion of their initial step forward.

This comes out in its crudest form in Sinclair Lewis. He warns that fascism is on its way. He describes its terroristic rule, its sadistic practices, its attacks on culture. But these good features of the book are marred by prejudices which he shares with the people whom he satirizes; their anti-semitic biases and their belief that the inherent stupidity of the American people is responsible for fascism. One gets the impression that he thinks all fascists are morons, the kind of people who don't do a good job of mowing Mr. Lewis' lawn. The economic and political factors which make for fascism are subordinated to the greed of a few clever politicians who put the whole thing over pretty much in the same fashion that the Anti-Saloon League put prohibition across.

He turns over the whole anti-fascist struggle to a few superior people like himself who love good music and hate New York. The Communists in the book are the bewhiskered foreigners of a Hearst cartoon, rooting for fascism, because that will make more converts chant "comes the revolution." Thus Mr. Lewis' indignation and his hatred of fascism stop short just at the point where he should ally himself with the anti-fascist movement. He won't have any truck with the masses, so he turns over the job of saving the country to an honest and rich Republican Senator. Mr. Lewis despises the Huey Longs and Talmadges (the counterparts of Buzz Windrip), but he falls for the intellectual front of Senator Arthur Vandenburg of Michigan, whom he apparently considers the ideal presidential candidate for 1936.

The same kind of confusion—although on a higher plane, of course, is immediately apparent in the books of Agar and Bingham. They denounce the sore spots of the present setup and are worried about the menace of fascism. This is a step to be welcomed. But ideological hangovers from their petty-bourgeois background make them propose unrealistic methods of defense. As in the case of Mr. Lewis, because they do not go forward boldly and follow through the logic of events, we find that in the final analysis their solutions will play straight into the hands of the enemy whom they wish to destroy.

Mr. Bingham, who is to the left of Mr. Agar, has good intentions, but unfortunately he seems to make a virtue of confused thinking. He presents an up-to-date version of Fabian "municipal socialism" combined with the most nonsensical theories of the technocrats and the most unrealistic proposals of Upton Sinclair. He is so afraid of Marxism, as the philosophy and program of action of the working class, that he patches together all the time-worn panaceas of populism and progressivism and presents them as the only approach to the problem in America. In the name of realism, he makes attempts to prove that the working class is disappearing. Having disposed of this straw man, he then goes on in the name of common sense to plead that only the middle class can lead the fight for his cooperative commonwealth.

Translating his theory into practice, Mr. Bingham has come out for the exclusion of the Communists from the Farmer-Labor Party movement. This is playing the game of the reactionaries who were the first to raise the Red scare in an attempt to disorganize the progressive forces by isolating the Communists and their ideas from the masses of people. Mr. Bingham, although it may horrify him, has taken a position which, if unchanged, would certainly nullify the fight against reaction. His emphasis on the leading role of the middle class, although it is composed of groups with clashing interests, is just what the fascist-minded Liberty Leaguers are doing. They too overemphasize the importance of the middle class, and pose as the leaders of a non-class movement. A progressive cannot allow himself to become the unwitting dupe of reaction by raising slogans and developing concepts which would be useful to the fascists in raising an army of storm troopers.

Mr. Agar falls into the same trap, although he follows a different road. An old-fashioned Jeffersonian liberal, he blames the evils of capitalism upon the monopolies. He does not realize that inevitably the system must breed bigger and bigger monopolies and that the only method of doing away with the extortion of trusts is to abolish capitalism. His solution is to turn back the clock of history and return to the society of small enterprises and handicraft workers of Jackson's day. This daydream could never be realized and for that matter is highly undesirable. Abundance for all can only be achieved if society fully utilizes the enormous potentialities of modern technology and large-scale production. To go backwards would make it impossible for humanity to pass into the kingdom of freedom that Engels speaks of; instead it would mean a "return to barbarism"—the slogan of the Nazis. Thus, Mr. Agar, who hates fascism, would provide the fascists with reactionary ideas, which they could use to dupe the very people whom he wishes to save.

It is significant that Father Coughlin has many times voiced the central idea of Mr. Agar—that small private property must be more widely distributed as the pre-condition for a new golden age. With similar promises Hitler persuaded the German petty-bourgeoisie to join in his fictitious crusade against "international finance." In Mr. Agar the dual personality of the petty-bourgeois comes out in his defense of democratic rights against the encroachments of the financial oligarchy and in his notion that the middle class can carry out this fight alone—if necessary by a middle-class dictatorship. But in practice this would mean a fascist dictatorship as the capitalists build up an army of storm troops marching with anti-Wall Street banners, but carrying out anti-working-class actions.

There are many good traditions in the old struggle of the middle class against Wall Street. But the fight today must be on an entirely different plane. The old middle-class revolt against the trusts was only in the interests of the small propertied man. The present revolt is in the interests of the whole working population and the leadership is in the hands of the very people whom the middle class ignored in its old fight against the monopolies. Unless the struggle is carried out on this higher plane, it can only end in another defeat. That is why we must repudiate reactionary elements in the middle-

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class tradition like the return to small-scale production.

The overemphasis of the role and importance of the middle class is carried to its logical end in Lawrence Dennis—who makes the first open plea for fascism in this country. His book and ideas are the product of the intellectual without faith in the masses, convinced that only a superior élite can handle the job of reconstructing society. Hence, he has passed from the conviction that capitalism is doomed to the hope that his superior kind of person can blackmail the capitalists into saving them from Communism, which he rejects on the ground that it will not pay him dividends in the near future.

Mr. Dennis speaks for that upper-middle-class stratum which still has security, but foresees the coming struggle for power between the haves and have-nots. They are the young men of Wall Street who on the West Coast have organized vigilante gangs; they are the Pareto enthusiasts who write "reactionary essays." What distinguishes them from the vacillating, lower-middle-class intellectuals is their realistic approach. They are determined to prevent the coming of a new social order, no matter what the cost in human lives or the damage to civilization. From this premise they proceed directly and brutally to the point—the fascist dictatorship—as the last resort of dying capitalism.

Mr. Dennis has no illusions about capitalism solving its general crisis through this or another new deal. His conviction is that the decay of the system must be organized. Hence he advises the capitalists to cloak the gangsterism of reaction with soothing rhetoric, to paint fascism as "a new social order, with its own synthesis of values or ends, and with a highly rational scheme of social means to these ends." Those intellectuals who fell for the high-sounding nonsense of Pareto should read Mr. Dennis as an example of how the former's ideas work out in practice.

The book of Mr. Dennis is simply a monstrous lie to hide the real aims of fascism—the open, brutal dictatorship of Big Business. There is nothing in the book about the actual dictatorship by blackjack and torture. Fascism is presented as "a formula for order and abundance." Only in the chapter dealing with women does the true face of fascism emerge and the Hitlerian attitude of making them mere breeding-animals breaks through the polished prose of Mr. Dennis. Of course, Mr. Dennis does not resort only to fantasy. His final word to those who disagree is that heads will roll:

> If capitalism is doomed, we must expect its successor to be largely the work of angry and frustrated men with a will to power. . . . Only a body of enlightened and sympathetic opinion will be able to impose upon an emergent fascism counsels of moderation and avert the extremes of a bitter class war.

It is indicative of the rapid growth of fascist sentiment in the United States that Mr. Dennis could issue his book. However, the majority of the American people hate fascism and Mr. Dennis' book was coolly received even by the capitalist press. To get around this widespread anti-fascist feeling the reactionary forces in the United States deny that their goal is fascism. Unlike the Nazis and the blackshirts, they pose as the defenders of democracy and people like Ogden Mills and the Liberty League crowd write books in defense of "liberalism." Mr. Dennis shrewdly points out that the fascists are "not likely to call the American fascism by that name. They are much more likely to include an emphatic denial that the new American fascism is fascism."

This presents an important problem to the progressive and radical groups in this country. Their spokesmen cannot attack reaction by merely labeling it fascist. They must clearly analyze the causes for the rise of fascism and they must just as clearly attack the fascists where they are most vulnerable. But above all, they must be careful not to deal themselves out of the game by giving the enemy slogans and material with which to split the ranks of the anti-fascist forces, to play off the middle class against the working class. To deny the class struggle and to invoke a mythical public in defense of some utopian proposal is to give the fascists very heavy ammunition.

DAVID RAMSEY.

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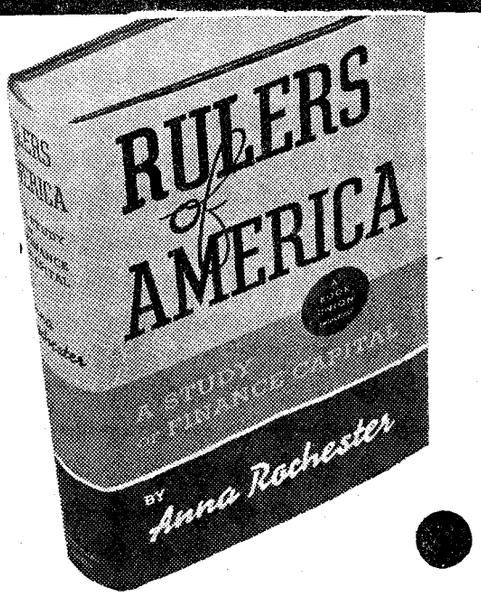

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Veblen and Revolution

WHAT VEBLEN TAUGHT. Selected Writings of Thorstein Veblen. Edited by Wesley C. Mitchell. Viking. $3.

TO JUDGE Veblen by his disciples would be uncharitable and misleading. Walter Polakov, Stuart Chase and Howard Scott have isolated themes of Veblen's thought and harped on them to mistaken conclusions; the Technocrats, whose creed Lewis Corey aptly described as power-mysticism, have scrupulously avoided the revolutionary implications of Veblenism. They neglect to quote Veblen's conclusion in 1929: "Just now Communism offers the best course that I can see." None of the idolaters has publicized Veblen's enthusiasm, expressed as early as 1919, over the success of the Bolshevik Revolution in the face of what he considered the brutal intervention of the capitalist world and the "Associated Prevarication Bureaux of the Allied Powers." And strikingly few Technocrats have appropriated Veblen's fundamental insight that "there is no single spot or corner in civilized Europe or America where the underlying population would have anything to lose by such an overturn [as the Soviet] of the established order as would cancel the vested rights of privilege and property."

It is unfortunate that this volume of "Selected Writings" does little to qualify the distortions of those who seek to characterize Veblen as the American Marx, seeking thereby to designate him master of their mushroom schools of social reformism. There are bound to be omissions, of course, in any selection, but an editor can, at least, choose on the basis of relevance to contemporary controversy. Professor Mitchell either ignored this principle or decided that revolutionary theory in an era of capitalist breakdown is of subordinate importance. He has included, for example, neither of Veblen's two essays on "The Social Economics of Karl Marx," in which Veblen was more seriously concerned with an attack on the classical economists who undervalued Marx than with his own theoretical disagreement. Such eye-openers for pure-racialists and anti-Semites as the three essays on the blond race, Aryan culture and the Jews in modern Europe, are not represented in this volume. The passages from *The Engineers and the Price System* (original title: "Bolshevism and the Vested Interests in America") on the social rôle of the A.F. of L., pointing to the need for industrial rather than craft organization, on the political apostasy of the post-war labor bureaucrats and on the Red Hunt of 1919, are not included. The selections have been made with an eye to the past rather than to 1936 and they do not express all fundamental aspects of Veblen's complex ideas.

Veblenism has become, in recent years, almost exclusively associated with the doctrine that the salvation of society rests in the hands of the technical experts, who constitute what Veblen called the General Staff of the industrial system. More recently, this doctrine has been generalized to include professionals, managerial staffs and skilled salaried employes; it has been elaborated into a theory of "middle-class revolution" in which organized labor would play a secondary part.

In a highly specialized industrial order, Veblen argued, the technicians—inventors, chemists, engineers, crop experts, etc.—have become the pivotal forces on whom the efficient functioning of the industrial machine depends. But their interest as technicians, which is to make industry as efficient and productive as possible, is in conflict with the financiers, whose single-minded aim is profit. Now profit, as Veblen agreed with Marx, often demands not capacity but curtailed production; to raise prices the business men sabotage the industrial machine, resort to a "conscientious withdrawal of efficiency." The output of the productive mechanism depends, then, not on the expertness of the engineers nor the needs of the underlying population, but on the vested interests of the "kept classes." Between the inventiveness and skill of the experts and the profits of the financiers there is a deeply-grounded conflict. Technology and natural resources require, for full expression, an economy of abundance; the price system of absentee ownership demands an economy of scarcity.

Up to this point, Veblen confirmed rather than contradicted Marx. In his emphasis on technology, however, Veblen sometimes spoke as if this were an independent factor rather than a phenomenon basically conditioned by the social relations of any society, including the capitalist. The importance of Marx's concept of labor-value Veblen did not sufficiently realize. It is this emphasis which led him to believe, though more tentatively than his disciples, that if only the engineers, by common action, could secure a free hand, the industrial problem would be solved. In speaking of a Soviet of Technicians, however, he made one important proviso, which has been neglected by his followers. Only those who were not habituated to business (that is, capitalist) modes of thought could create such a Soviet. This is, of course, a crucial point. For if one thing is overwhelmingly clear, it is that such engineers as Polakov and Scott, to say nothing of those still less radical, are not prepared to abandon the prepossessions of the system. The professional interest of an engineer in capacity production is by no means an all-sufficient incentive to social change, although the degradation of the engineers' craft function may be used to stir them to action. Moreover, the engineers are not, economically and socially, a unified group, for the professional interests of the upper layers are identified with all the profit relations of capitalism,

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against the interests of the lower layers of engineers. The vast population of workers and farmers and of lower-salaried employes (including engineers) and professionals, increasingly deprived of the goods machines are capable of producing, do have an incentive to social change. Without their political power and pressure, the experts remain the servants of absentee capitalist ownership. The social change which Veblen desired can be achieved not through the isolation of a limited group in society but through the extensive cooperation of all working groups which suffer from the system of business enterprise, or capitalism. The proper organization of this power for the purpose of revolutionary social action is the meaning of Marxism.

WALTER RALSTON.

Clerks Become Workers

THE CONDITION OF CLERICAL LABOR IN ENGLAND, by F. D. Klingender. International Publishers. $1.25.

THIS workmanlike statistical and theoretical study of clerical employes, "the largest and most closely knit section of the lower middle class," opens with an analysis of English class relations, particularly of "the 'new middle class' of salary earners." The English middle class comprises 27 percent of all persons gainfully occupied (the American, 25 percent); independent small enterprises of all types number 8 percent and salaried employes 19 percent (5 percent and 20 percent in the United States). In both countries the middle class, as usually and broadly defined, is largely composed of propertiless, dependent salaried employes and professionals. And in England, as in the United States, those who argue that the proletariat is being displaced by the middle class are wrong, for as Klingender points out, "the relative strength of the working class proper has not declined . . . but has on the contrary been substantially increased since the heyday of competitive capitalism."

The growth of clerical (and of other salaried) employes coincides with the expansive period of monopoly capitalism and imperialism. Clerks in England rose from 1.2 percent of the gainfully occupied in 1851 to 7.5 percent in 1921 and 7.8 percent in 1931. The rate of expansion has fallen, however. It was seven times as great as for all occupations in the thirty years 1851-81 and two to four times as great in the next forty years; but in 1921-31 the rate of increase in clerical employes was not much greater than for all occupations, 13.3 per cent and 9.8 percent respectively. This is substantially the same as the American experience.

American experience is again paralleled in the steady proletarianization of English clerical employes. In early capitalism clerks were definitely a part of the lower middle class, whose children had a monopoly of clerical employment. That monopoly was broken after 1870 (earlier in the United States) when England introduced compulsory education for the children of wage-workers, who increasingly flocked into clerical work because it was considered "superior" and a form of "rising." The social composition of clerks was again lowered by the influx of women. Working conditions deteriorated and differentiation became greater between the lower and higher clerical employes. Specialization and rationalization of clerical functions was multiplied by mechanization of office work, especially in the 1920's. The small group of better-paid clerks became still smaller, while the great majority of lower-paid clerks earned not much more than the average wage-worker and less than skilled wage-workers. Again paralleling American experience, the crisis of the 1930's completed the process of economic proletarianization, for it destroyed the traditional security of employment. One illustration: unemployed clerks registered in London rose from 4,758 in May, 1929 to 18,253 in April, 1933; in July, 1934 the registered unemployed still numbered 10,776. In addition, clerical salaries were slashed from 5 to 40 percent. Clerks are now economically members of the working class.

The steady lowering of working conditions and salaries moved clerks toward unions and strikes. Unionism had its beginnings in the 1890's, and it was stimulated during the World War when clerical salaries (unlike wages) lagged greatly behind the rising cost of living. The National Union of Clerks increased its membership fourfold. Bank clerks, traditionally the most "gentlemanly," formed a guild which the banks fought with staff guilds or company unions. There were many strikes. During the 1920's, however, clerical unionism seriously declined. Managements "cultivated" their clerks to separate them from the wage-workers — "gentility" and prejudices were exploited, anti-Red propaganda carried on and clerks were encouraged, with holidays and other measures, to join the territorial army or special constabulary (which was mobilized against the London Hunger March in 1932). Some clerks joined in the general strike of 1926, but the great majority scabbed. The setback to clerical unionism was largely the result of "lack of a conscious lead on the part of the working class," which "enabled the capitalists to regain the allegiance of the great mass of clerical workers." The crisis of capitalism makes it constantly clearer, however, that clerks must recognize their identity with the working class, organize militant unions and engage in the struggle for socialism.

After showing that fascism depends upon the petty-bourgeois masses, but makes their conditions worse (reduction of higher education, impoverishment of small enterprises, persistence of unemployment and lower earnings among salaried employes) Klingender concludes:

> Socialism alone can offer unlimited possibilities of expansion and the fullest development of their faculties to the professional workers and clerks, as to the manual workers. Not only is the clerk's work rendered immeasurably more interesting to him, since he has full knowledge of its function in the socialist economy as a whole, and since he is personally interested in the results of his labor, not only has he for the first time a real chance of exercising his full capabilities and of rising to a position appropriate to his skill, but his economic situation, even in the lowest grades of work, is greatly improved. That these are not empty promises is proved by the situation of clerical labor in the Soviet Union.

LEWIS COREY.

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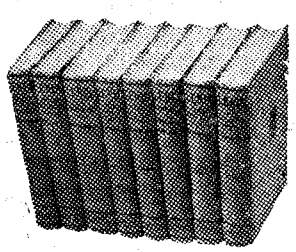

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Letter from America

SALEM, MASS.

FORGIVE me for a burst of enthusiasm. I have this day been reading my first NEW MASSES, and I must explain things.

I am a case of contemptible Yankee mixed with the desire to be drifting down a river where I would like to believe it was always early in the morning. I was raised on a Vermont farm where the thunder from the mountains rumbled over the valley like a team of mad horses yanking a blue tip-cart. I have stood in the doorway of a woodshed listening to the sound of dribbling rain-water while I looked down into little mud puddles and wondered what life was going to be like when I grew up. My grandfather, who died sitting upright in the shade of a gnarled tree, bought the farm when New England soil was new and interesting. Anyway, long after the well went dry and the cows died, I took my lady-friend up to the old place. She was a kind of snobby artist and made sketchings of my boyhood tramping-ground. The hollow-eyed homestead and the barn and the woodshed were made to live again in her sketch book. We wept a bit, peered through a broken window and drove back to the city thinking how lovely tall grass can be—when it's green and waving in the early summer wind.

But really, since my Vermont days, I think nothing important has happened to my life. I grew up remembering the mud puddles in the farm yard. I grew up living a very colorless existence. No one paid much attention to me. I did manage to marry an Irish girl, and I did manage to travel all over the states. I disliked schools of so-called learning. So Henry Ford hired me to help him in his little temple of science in Dearborn. I grew tired and made a dash over to Harry Warner's outfit in Hollywood, where I helped to get out the first world's all-talkies. I very soon got fired and returned to the Eastern States looking for a newspaper that might (I thought) like to collar a young writer. Well—I can't spell worth a damn, and so, no newspaper hired me. And so I read Mencken, the heel, and grew tired of everything. Since then I have remained in bed dreaming of apples falling in Ipswich.

Well, I can assure you I was at a very low ebb until one day recently, a friend of mine comes to my death-bed with a few old copies of THE NEW MASSES. After all of these hopeless years of blind staggering—from one state to another—at last I discover a good reason to arise and shave early in the morning!

And so . . . I got excited because life starts all over again. Of course, I shall never sling apples across the meadows again. I shall never again be so intent listening to rain-water's song. I discover now that there is work to be done! Real work which has nothing to do with slinging apples across meadows. It is a work which I think will be the most important I have ever tackled in my life. In my excitement my mind is confused. Naturally it is in the same order as that of thousands of other young men—confused and distorted, etc. But there is hope now and in us there is no longer that feeling of fumbling around in a dark chamber.

I have already shown some of my acquaintances THE NEW MASSES, and I have already read some of the new revolutionary poems. My frail voice rings out through hall-ways and inner sanctums of ye olde Salem towne. Eyes bulge as I pour out the new and highly effective spirit contained in the proletarian literature. I dare not mention the word "Communist" in this town. It was here that Giles Corey was pressed to death. And Sadie Toothacher and her child and her little dog incarcerated and later hanged at Gallows Hill.

They even drove them through the Salem streets; over the cobbled stones and past a labyrinth of quaint little churches and colonial door-ways. When poor Giles was being pressed to death he pleaded with the townsfolk to "Please put the stones on faster." "Faster." "Faster." But the townspeople up here do things in a precise manner. They do it slowly and they endeavor to make it last!

Forgive me for displaying such enthusiasm, but gentlemen, you too, would become excited if you lived in this proud old corner of a crumbling world; in a world where the dying embers of decay stink worse than smoldering marsh hay over beyond the electrical works, etc., etc. . . . but I am no artist and I am a poor writer. Nevertheless, I sincerely wish to assure you that I'll be a good reader of THE NEW MASSES.

JOHN BERESFORD.

"Oh boy, another five minutes and we can all go home and rest!"

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Current Theater

Bitter Stream (Civic Repertory Theater). The seventh production of the Theater Union. Victor Wolfson's play about Fascist Italy, the first on the subject to appear in America. To be reviewed next week. Tickets 35 cents.

Triple-A Plowed Under (Biltmore Theater). Don't miss this W.P.A. production of the Living Newspaper. Fifty minutes of absorbing, rapid-fire theater, with a last scene (based on a news-bulletin) changed nightly. Closes April 11. Shows at 7:30 and 9. 25 cents unreserved seats.

Theater Piece: New Dance (Adelphi Theater). The New Dance League devotes its next "night" to this splendid new work by Doris Humphrey and Charles Weidman. Earnest, satirical, richly designed and often magnificently executed, it's required attendance of all dance followers.

Power of the Press (Civic Reportory Theater, April 5). New Theater League and New Theater Magazine present Richard Rohman's new play in a benefit performance for the American Newspaper Guild Emergency Fund. Heywood Broun will be master of ceremonies.

Theater Collective: Three Plays (Provincetown Playhouse, Macdougall Street). *You Can't Change Human Nature* (Philip Stevenson), *The Pastry Baker* (Lope de Vega)—and *Private Hicks* (Albert Maltz) which Robert Forsythe calls "one of the best things in the left theater."

Murder in the Cathedral (Manhattan Theater). T. S. Eliot's play (production of the Popular Price Theater, W. P. A.), extended until April 11. Though at times difficult and tiresome, this play about Thomas à Becket is indispensable to anyone seriously interested in the future of the poetic drama as a living theater form.

Case of Clyde Griffiths (Barrymore Theater). The Group Theater's production of Erwin Piscator's dramatic recreation of Dreiser's *An American Tragedy*. As gripping and provocative an evening in the theater as you could currently find—until it closed suddenly on March 28. THE NEW MASSES hopes it will be revived.

Love on the Dole (Longacre Theater). Subsistence love, British style, in an adaptation of Walter Greenwood's novel. Important as documentation and aided by some excellent acting, but about as uneven a piece of writing as you could imagine. It wobbles along till the finale and then it suddenly acquires sharpness and power.

Russet Mantle (Masque Theatre). Lynn Riggs' tragi-comedy of youth and its elders. Not the whole story but as far as it goes, absorbing, warm drama. For listeners who use both eyes and both ears.

Boy Meets Girl (Cort Theater): Not nearly as luscious a travesty on Hollywood as *Once in a Lifetime*, but biting and funny enough to make creditable—if thin—entertainment.

S. B.

Current Films

These Three (United Artists-Rivoli): In many ways this made-safe-for-the-movie-public-version of *The Children's Hour* is an unusual film. Although Lillian Hellman's writing never achieves brilliance it manages to create a very sincere note. In contrast to this is the typical pedestrian "Hollywooden" approach of director William Wyler. However, the acting of the children is remarkable—which alone makes the film more than worthwhile.

Milky Way (Paramount): By all means the funniest Harold Lloyd film in years, in addition to being a skillfully constructed comedy. But what is even more outstanding is the casting: there isn't a superfluous actor in the movie and everyone plays his best. Adolph Menjou is even better than his famous role in *The Front Page* and Lionel Stander as a prizefighter's trainer is a joy. The film even approaches the satiric in its treatment of prize fighting for the racket it is.

Petticoat Fever (M.G.M.—Capitol): A mildly amusing affair with the beaming Robert Montgomery and the charming Myrna Loy.

Boulder Dam (Warner Bros.—Astor): A superficial treatment of a Warner "labor" theme with the Boulder Dam dragged in as a back drop.

Thirteen Hour By Air (Paramount): Another Grand Hotel idea; this time in a transport plane.

Singin' Kid (Warner Bros.—Strand): A song sequence toward the end of the film done with unusual imagination and skill makes this the outstanding musical film of the year. Al Jolson is his usual self and he gets wonderful support from the Yacht Club Boys and the dynamic Cab Calloway.

P. E.

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What God Hath Wrought!

ROBERT FORSYTHE

IF THE Russian directors will take my advice and start work on a Soviet version of *The Country Doctor,* I think I can settle the matter of Art and Propaganda. The subject of the Dionne Quints screams for treatment by somebody who will tell the complete story. We may get it piecemeal even here because I note by a Hollywood dispatch that Universal is enlisting Papa and Mrs. Oliva Dionne and their six *older* children in making *Where Are My Children?* but that could never approach the problem. It needs doing as a great classic of socialism for, even in the great land of Canada, it was found that the state had a responsibility to its inhabitants, provided they came in sets of five.

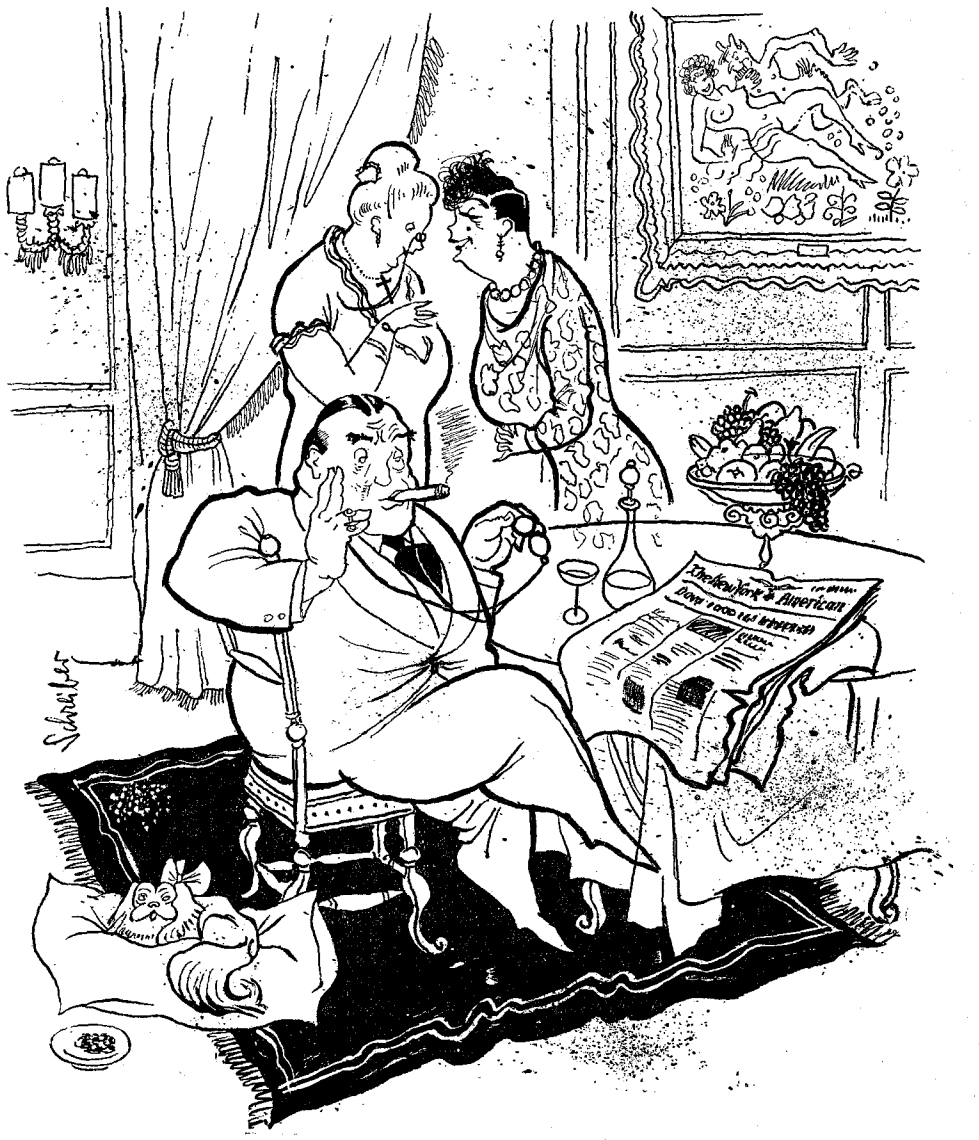
Consider the matter from the beginning: the Dionnes are a desperately poor family with six children already threatening to drive Mr. Dionne to a pauper's grave. Being Catholic, there is no question of birth control and, as in most cases with the poor, the Dionnes are in no financial position to take advantage of such knowledge even if desiring it. Dr. Dafoe, the village physician, is called in the middle of the night and finds that two children have already been born under the ministrations of the midwife. He starts delivering additional infants but his main concern is with Mrs. Dionne, who is obviously in grave danger. Then a remarkable thing happens. Dr. Dafoe, a non-Catholic and a fine doctor, leaves his patient and goes for a priest. I am reporting exactly what occurred. The patient is in danger of death, the babies are still being born, but Dr. Dafoe, conscious of his responsibility in a Catholic neighborhood, acts as it is necessary for him to act.

However, Mrs. Dionne is alive when he gets back and the five children are at least breathing, although they look more like little rats than human beings. (See Paul de Kruif's *Why Keep Them Alive?* for a magnificent account of the medical side of the births.) The news of the births becomes at once an international sensation, growing in intensity as the Quints remain alive beyond the record of all former quintuplets. Acting with commendable promptness, the Canadian government steps in and takes charge of the case. The babies become, for a time at least and perhaps for all time, a charge of the state. It happens, of course, that these are the only infants cared for in such a manner, but the socialistic precedent has been set. It even acts to assist other extraordinary families, as we shall see a few paragraphs later on.

It is hardly possible that what follows could ever be made part of a Hollywood film, but it would be an important and psychologically profound section of a Soviet picture. I refer to the battle which immediately ensued when Papa Dionne sought to obtain control of the children for the purpose of fulfilling a contract which would have had them as exhibits at the Chicago World's Fair. If memory sustains me I think I am correct in saying that the notion of such procedure did not begin shocking the American public until the action of the Canadian government in thwarting Mr. Dionne brought home the horror of subjecting the children to such a fate.

All this time the fight for the lives of the children was going forward desperately and it was nip and tuck for many weeks, with serums being flown in from America on one occasion and with the government and private support being forthcoming both for the pay of nurses and finally the erection of a hospital for the care of the infants. It seemed rather well established by this time that no matter what other children might escape the care of the authorities, there was a plain duty in the case of quintuplets. It was some weeks later that the moral was made entirely evident and in this case the Quints came to the rescue of the quadruplets, who had hitherto not been of sufficient importance to warrant the full attention of the government at Ottawa. I have reference to the Mahaney quadruplets of, I think, Toronto. The family was about to be evicted from its home, Mr. Mahaney was out of work and relief was not adequate to care for the burden. Happily for him, there was money in the Quints' fund which could be transferred and the Mahaneys, temporarily at least, were saved. What would have happened without the Quints' fund is a matter of doubt. All that is known is that nothing was done before.

Matters in the Dionne family were equally upset in the earlier days and are by no means



"He's trying *so* hard to think up some new atrocity for dear Mr. Hearst!" *Georges Schreiber*

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adjusted at the moment. Across the road from the hospital of the Quints, who were getting every care in the world, was the dilapidated home of the Dionnes. Pictures of the six older children were not originally a pretty sight. They looked like the children of a Southern sharecropper, plainly undernourished, plainly the children of hopeless people. The world was more than slightly annoyed by the Dionnes when they allowed a theatrical manager to book Papa and Mama in a Chicago theater, but the need of the family was only partly allayed in the beginning.

They are said to be getting $100 a month from the children's money now, but it was much less originally. A straight factual account of the lives of the two groups of children would be movie material of the finest sort for a director interested in human reactions. On the one side individualism, Church, the family and poverty; on the other the power of the state, nationalized children, socialism, health and plenty. For conflict there would be the struggle of Mr. Dionne to get his children back. He has fought the other trustees (Dr. Dafoe and a local judge); he has had the support of the local priest; he has written personally to King Edward. There is no end to the variations on this theme. What would have been the attitude of the government in the case of a middle-class family having Quints, or of a wealthy family? Is the state involved because an Act of God has occurred or because it feels an obligation to the poverty-stricken parents? Has their action been taken in the name of science? Is the home sacred? What is to become of the children when they are old enough to leave the hospital? What would have happened in the United States under similar circumstances? (FLASH: SUPREME COURT HOLDS DR. DAFOE UNCONSTITUTIONAL.)

The picture could be, I submit, the great film epic of our time, possessing personal conflict and drama as well as social ideas. Instead of the present scene in *The Country Doctor* of the father's actions upon the birth of the Quints, I should prefer the classical words which were attributed to him in the early dispatches: "I ought to be shot." In some symbolic way, I hope that the Soviet director will be able to include a scene in which a father already possessing six starving children waits for news of his wife's confinement. There is one child and he is relieved, there is a second child and he is worried, there is a third child and he is terrified, there is a fourth child and his terror mounts to frenzy. If there are no more, he is ruined; if there is a fifth, he will be the guest of Kings. Can anybody imagine a more dramatic moment!

The film, the Soviet version of the film, would have that and everything else. . . . Stirring drama, accurate factual reporting, an artistic production. . . . And What Truth. . . . Sometimes referred to as Propaganda!

Between Ourselves

THIS NEW MASSES quarterly marks the first concerted attempt on the part of an American magazine to explore problems of middle-class people, to deal realistically with their economic and cultural predicament and to present a constructive program for the solution of their difficulties. In gathering material we have obtained considerably more articles than we could possibly publish in one issue, the expanded 48-page size notwithstanding. We were particularly sorry to have to omit an article on "Middle Class Struggles," by Professor Brooks Otis of Hobart College. This and many other articles of specific interest to middle-class people will appear in forthcoming issues, among them "Middle Classes and Taxation" by Simon Doniger.

Meyer Schapiro's discussion of "Architecture and the Architect" is offered as the first of a series on the general subject of the degradation of craft functions. Mark Graubard has written on "Science and the Scientist" and Isidor Schneider on "Writing and the Writer." These will appear in the near future.

For the interest of people who are making the acquaintance of THE NEW MASSES for the first time, the following brief information on the contributors to this issue is offered:

David Ramsey, scientist and economist, writes frequently for the periodical press.

Michael Gold, an editor of THE NEW MASSES, author of *120 Million, Jews Without Money*, etc., was for a long time editor of the monthly New Masses as well as an editor of The Liberator and The Masses.

Mary Van Kleeck is the Director of the Department of Industrial Studies of the Russell Sage Foundation.

Lewis Corey, chairman of the editorial committee which has prepared this issue, is the author of *The Decline of American Capitalism* and *The Crisis of the Middle Class.*

Genevieve Taggard has published several volumes of verse and literary criticism. She teaches at Sarah Lawrence College.

A. B. Magil, of The Daily Worker editorial staff, is a frequent contributor to THE NEW MASSES and other periodicals.

Stanley Burnshaw, author of *André Spire and His Poetry* and *The Iron Land,* writes regularly on the theater for THE NEW MASSES.

Loren Miller, former NEW MASSES editor and at present one of our contributing editors, has long been a specialist on Negro problems.

John Buchanan was a member of the staff of The Cleveland Times and The Plain Dealer.

Francis J. Gorman is the first vice-president of the United Textile Workers of America. His paper printed in this issue arrived too late to be delivered at the opening meeting of the American Artists Congress held Feb. 14, in New York.

Herbert Agar is the author of *The Land of the Free.* He is a well-known historian.

Corliss Lamont was a member of the department of philosophy at Columbia University. He has published two books: *Soviet Russia Day by Day* and *The Illusion of Immortality.*

Granville Hicks was literary editor of THE NEW MASSES from January, 1934 until October when he began work on his biography of John Reed. The book has b[illegible] announced as the April choice of the B[illegible]n.

Meyer Schapiro is an instructo[illegible] Columbia University.

Anna Rochester's *Rulers of America* w[illegible] the March choice of the Book Union. [illegible]e is a staff member of the Labor Resear[illegible] Association.

Harold Ward contributes articles and book reviews to THE NEW MASSES, The New Republic, etc.

Joseph Freeman, an editor of THE NEW MASSES, and author of *The Soviet Worker,* has published several books on politics and on literature. His new book, *An American Testament,* will appear soon.

Isidor Schneider, literary editor of THE NEW MASSSES, has written two volumes of poetry (*The Temptation of Anthony, Comrade Mister*) and two novels (*Doctor Transit, From the Kingdom of Necessity*).

Walter Ralston reviews books regularly for THE NEW MASSES.

Robert Forsythe's articles, among the most popular features of THE NEW MASSES, were collected into a book, *Redder Than the Rose,* which appeared last year. *The World Gone Mad,* one of his more recent articles has been reprinted as a pamphlet.

Joseph Gower, Russell T. Limbach, Scott Johnston, Crockett Johnson, Jacob Burck, A. Redfield, Ned Hilton, Georges Schreiber, Mackey are among the many artists whose drawings appear regularly in our pages. Burck, formerly our art editor, is now on the staff of Komsomolskaya Pravda, a Soviet periodical.

Fred Brown will speak on "Fascism As It Works" at the next meeting of the Friends of THE NEW MASSES, New York Branch (Wednesday, April 8, at 8:30 p.m., Studio 717A, Steinway Hall, 115 West 57th Street). Visitors are invited.

Two affairs recently held in New York for the benefit of THE NEW MASSES proved especially successful. An enthusiastic, large audience attended Rosalyn Tureck's piano recital at the Brooklyn Academy of Music. Proceeds for the benefit of the May Department Store strikers and THE NEW MASSES. And at a unique dance held recently in New York, Harriet Hawkins, Frederick Cotton and Victor Vordan entertained and Dick Carroll personally conducted his band to provide music for "one of the liveliest parties in recent years."

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